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ABSTRACT

Focusing on the various problems involved in designing and producing a picturebook, this document consists of opening remarks by Kenneth Morantz; a discussion of design in the context of publishing, by editor Stephen Roxburgh; a discussion of what separates children's book publishing from the rest of the trade as well as what contributes to the success or failure of some of the books, by publisher and editor David Godine; an exploration of the art work and graphics of picture books, by art director Ava Weiss and author-illustrator Vera Williams; a description of some steps in the making of a picturebook, by author-illustrator Leonard Everett Fisher; a personal account of writing and illustrating children's books, by author-illustrator Irene Haas; and a discussion (including questions and answers) of the illustrations from "The Amazing Garden," a book for the general reader about the brain, by author-illustrator David Macaulay. The document concludes with questions from the floor and answers by the presenters. (EL)

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Proceedings

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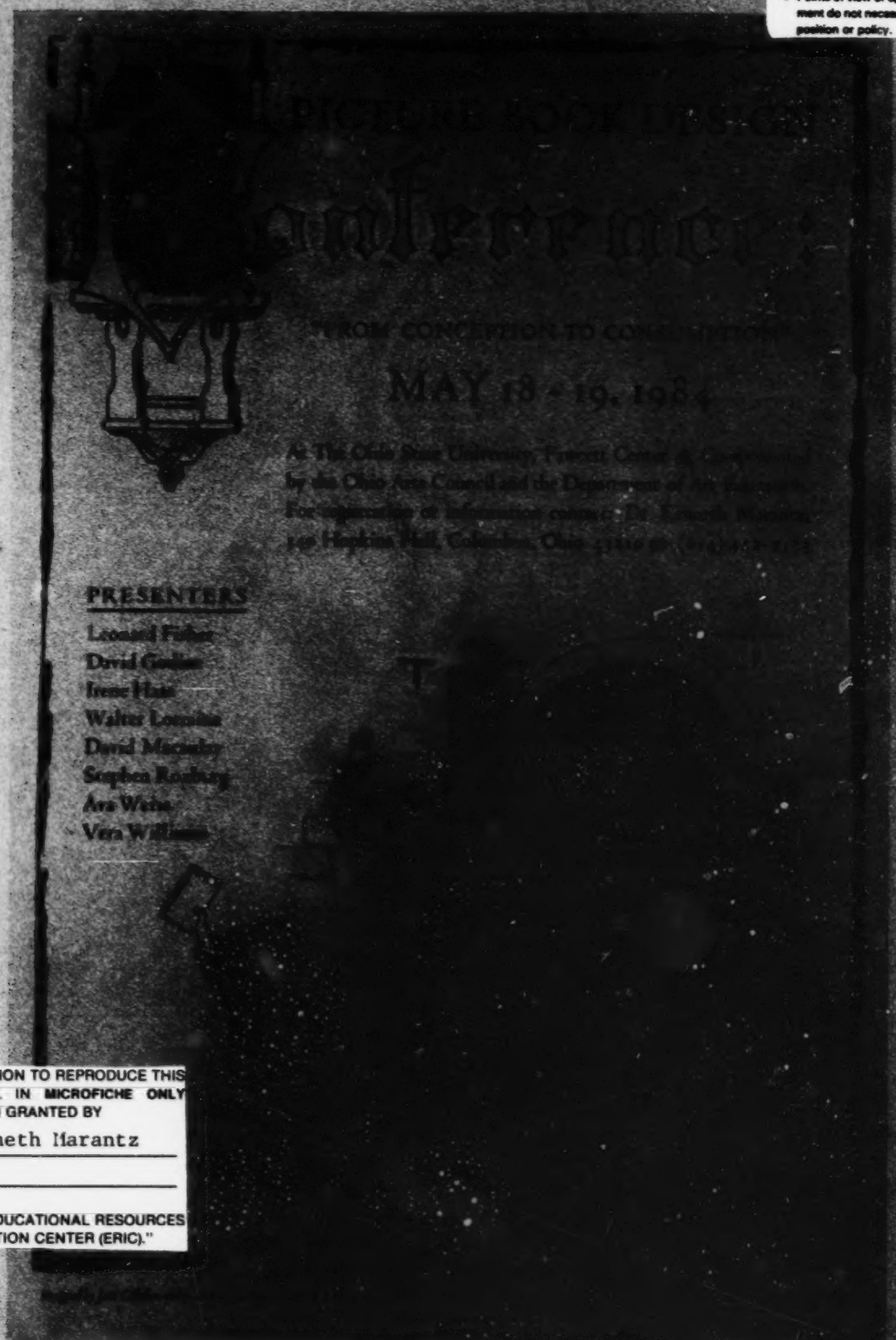

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PICTURE BOOK DESIGN CONFERENCE:
From Conception to Consumption

Co-sponsored by
The Ohio Arts Council
and the
Art Education Department of
The Ohio State University

May 18th and 19th, 1984
Fawcett Center for Tomorrow

PROGRAM

Friday, May 18th --

8:00 - Opening Remarks: Kenneth Marantz (conference coordinator)

- An editor helps set the stage: Stephen Roxburgh (Farrar, Strauss & Giroux)

- A publisher brings up the curtain: David R. Godine

9:15 - Question and Comments: Everybody

9:45 - Cash Bar and Autographing: Everybody

Saturday, May 19th --

8:15 - Wake up coffee

The author/artists present

8:45 - Vera Williams and Ava Weiss

9:45 - Leonard Everett Fisher

10:30 - Coffee Break

10:45 - Irene Haas

11:45 - David Macaulay

12:45 - Lunch

1:30 - Open discussion

3:30 - Close of conference (all are welcome to stay for an hour or so to continue conversations)

4:00-6:00 - Open House at the Logan Elm Press

List of Support Personnel

Robert Tauber, Co-coordinator

Cassandra Tellier, Manager

Joan Callahan, Poster Designer

Izabel De Souza, Assistant Manager

Mary Sullivan, Transcriber

Judy Sachter, Helper

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Presenters

Leonard Everett Fisher, author and illustrator

David Godine, publisher and editor

Irene Haas, author and illustrator

David Macaulay, author and illustrator

Stephen Roxburgh, editor and teacher

Ava Weiss, art director

Vera Williams, author and illustrator

Kenneth Marantz, chairman, Art Education Department

A Note on Process

Designed to be a set of conversations among presenters and participants, all of us stayed together for all sessions. Microphones were set up to capture all the talk. These Proceedings are as close to a verbatim report as we could manage considering the uneven quality of the recordings, the frequent simultaneous talk generated by involved people, and some modest editing of the transcript by a couple of the presenters. At least four people listened to the hours of taped talk in order to insure the greatest accuracy and all presenters were given a chance to edit. There has been no effort made to interpret. What you read here, except for coffee and lunch breaks, is 97% of the talk generated by a common need to understand more of what problems are involved in designing and producing a picturebook.

PICTUREBOOK DESIGN CONFERENCE

May 17th & 18th, 1984

Kenneth Marantz:

I'd like to bring a welcome to you, first of all, from The Ohio Arts Council which has provided some of the funding and, equally important, has given us the spiritual kick in the rear end to get this event moving. And also from the Art Education Department of OSU whose members tolerate the quirks and aberrations of their chairman. We all welcome you to what we hope will be 20 hours of conversations and dreams. Good conversations and good dreams about a crucial but traditionally neglected aspect of contemporary visual arts; that is, the design of picturebooks.

The seed of this conference has been gestating somewhere in my psyche many years. I felt its first jolting kick last year when Fritz Eichenberg was announced as this year's Arbuthnot Lecturer. We tried to get him here but we lost out to Minnesota. Anyway, he was, as I looked over the list, the first artist in the series of Arbuthnot lectures. Obviously, it seemed to me that the field had begun to give much more serious consideration to the look of the book instead of just the words in the book. And I tried to figure out how we could celebrate the art of the picturebook in a special way. The notion of a conference of people, a mix of people responsible for the various decisions which are needed to create such objects sort of sashayed past my overripe imagination. And I felt a flush of seduction.

I've been very lucky to count as friends several movers and shakers in the publishing world so I turned to Walter Lorraine (who can't be here because of a logjam of business demands) and Stephen Roxburgh who is indeed very much here and will be the second person to address you this evening. Both were very encouraging but Stephen in particular was invaluable in helping to shape the structure of this affair. Then I had the audacity, compounded by my naive enthusiasm and ignorance of conference complexities, to invite six more of the field's major figures to come together to talk about their artistry in one short period of time. And at this beginning I want to publicly express my gratitude to each of them for making room in very busy schedules to come to the heartland of America to join a handful of interested outlanders in talking shop.

As an outlander, as an academic, an appreciator, a critic, I have for some 30 years (since the birth of my first child who just happens to be in the audience as well) been involved with picturebooks. Even as a green teacher in an elementary school on Long Island, I suspected that these things were too good to be left exclusively in the hands of those who considered them just literature. Unschooled in the formal

approaches to the genre, my education came directly from the books. Could the touchstones of the art studio: the concerns for color relationships, and balance, and texture, expressive form and the rest of the galaxy of principles and elements; could these touchstones be any different than those used to create picturebooks? Surely for the Wyeths and the Rackhams and the Eichenbergs--the fraternity of artists who produce pictures to illustrate stories--there could be no difference.

These master illustrators, artists, contributed to a different genre, one that exploited pictures to illuminate only a few frozen sections of the total organism that is a book. The text was conceived without them and could survive quite well if some vandal stripped the books of these plates. Not so, of course, with a picturebook. Take Leo Lionni's torn paper characters from Little Blue and Little Yellow and you have emasculated a potent tale of tolerance. Maybe this sexy metaphor is as good as any other to describe the relationship (where there is a written instead of an implied text) between the word and the image. For, as an appreciator, I sense a neutering of the organism when the images are excised. There is for me a kind of a love affair between the two forms of expression that is carried on as the pages are turned. In the act of turning the pages we come to a unique characteristic of the picturebook: its temporal nature, the essential sequentialness of its being.

Our University library shelves are stacked with volumes of studies on children's picture preferences--all based on some direct or, worse, bowdlerized pictures extracted from picturebooks. On the more positive side, several artists have expressed their beliefs in the cinemagraphic quality of picturebooks and I'm sure that most others, if asked to respond, would concur. How else could one accept the challenge of 32 or 48 or whatever number of blank pages? Indeed, I wonder what our friends at Weston Woods and Pied Piper and all would do if such books were not so carefully conceived as sequences of images. Where would filmstrips be? Does McDermott's reverse order of creation, that is, from the film to the book, add any fuel to my fire?

One of the joys of this kind of meeting is the chance to test my outlander's, perhaps outlandish, observations against the truths of the people who create the books. As a reviewer and a teacher I have to begin with objects. Products of a mysterious and complex process. Although only the names of the author and artist are printed on the title page (on very, very special occasions an editor is included), I have come to realize how many others participate in the complex of decision making needed to place a book in my hands. That's why some very important names appear on this program, names that the great majority of you probably don't recognize. David Godine, who's now here, is a publisher of beautiful books. His Early Children's Books and Their Illustrators, entrusted to him by the Morgan Library, is a prime example of the care he lavishes on the books he produces. Although he publishes a variety of books he obviously has a special affinity for the picture-

book. Stephen Roxburgh is an editor; a person who must identify the talent the publisher will back. I envy him the necessity of attending such annual events as the Children's Book Fair in Bologna where he is forced to examine, literally, thousands of books and portfolios, etc., in order to find a handful for possible publication. And Ava Weiss (an old friend who probably is most responsible for bringing me into this field), who is scheduled for tomorrow morning, works intimately in the design process all the way through the printing process at the press to guarantee that the shared vision comes close to objectification. These three are stars in the publishing firmament whose light, I feel, needs to be received by those of us who value picturebooks. They perhaps, even more than the author/artist, are the reason for this gathering. Of course I say "even more" only because we are more accustomed to learning from the author/artists. It's the teamwork, the arguments, the compromises, the significant production problems that are to be the focus of our conversation.

Stephen Roxburgh:

I find it very strange to come to the middle of Ohio to talk about children's picturebook design when I can't even get anybody to talk about it in New York in my office. But I'll assume that Ken has done his job in getting people here who care about such esoteric things as picturebook design. What I'm going to do is talk to you about how you get the books out there. You like them or you don't like them; and that's all well and good. But it frequently takes a longer time to make a book than the book has an active life in the public, sad to say. It can take two or three years, it can take longer, it can take less time; but often it can take a very long time and an awful lot of people are involved. What I want to talk to you about a little bit is the way that these books get to you, the publishing procedure that creates them and where they all fit into that. Specifically I want to talk in terms of design and the aspects of the publishing procedure that impinge on what's going on in the design of these books--so that you can first have a sense of what some of the people are going to be talking about after me, and secondly just so that you'll have a sense of where the books come from.

An older and wiser and much more experienced editor than I am once described publishing as a combination of commerce and art. We are talking about trade publishing here, and I think that's a very useful description to think about in terms of these books because trade publishers are trying to make some money. They have to; they have to make enough money to keep the operation going. They are not, intentionally, non-profit organizations. Sometimes it's not always clear from the books that that's the case, but they're not. But also they are, because we're not just producing computer chips or widgets or gadgets. We're producing books, we're producing and manufacturing what we feel are art pieces. The book arts are very important to many of us, most of us.

Sometimes it seems, when you look at the books that are out there, that publishing is either commerce or art, or it seems sometimes that it's commerce versus art. But actually I think it is commerce and art. And the simple fact of the matter is that good book making costs money. That is, good book making costs more money than bad book making; and by extension, good design costs more money than bad design. I'm not talking about taste here. It's simply that paying attention to design elements costs more money than lack of attention to design elements. The sales price of the book is based on the cost of the manufactured book; and the cost of the manufactured book is based on many elements, and most of them are design elements: paper, printing, etc. (and I'll get into those in a minute). Just for the moment, keep in mind the things I'm talking about. It's not just a matter of someone sitting back in an office and saying "Well, should we do this this way or that way just for the pure aesthetic of it." There's always a commercial factor and economic factor and some people pay more attention to them and some people pay less attention to them.

Okay, so publishing covers a range of books: you have on one extreme for our purposes mass market paperbacks--you all know what they look like. They cost $1.95; the design is special. At the other end of the extreme you have fine printing, exquisitely produced books on handmade paper printed in small editions that cost $1,500 a book. There's a wide range between the mass market paperbook and the fine press book. Somewhere in the middle of all that (how I gauged the middle, I'd have to spend too much time talking about) is, I think, trade children's book publishing. Yes, we produce the book for a price that people can afford. No, we don't sacrifice all concern for the look of the book to the cost factor. I'm not, by that, diminishing mass market publishing. That's a certain kind of publishing. I'm only making these judgments in terms of design. So, the factors that come into conflict, the two factors that come head to head in every book that is made, are the commercial factor (the price) and the artistic factor (that is the quality of the inherent artistic aesthetic quality of what you have).

Having said all that, one thing you have to keep in mind is that every book that you see is designed. Somebody designed it, somebody selected the type, somebody determined the trim size, somebody did the display, the layout, all that. Every book you see is designed. And yet, some books are beautiful, some books are not beautiful. So, in these terms, what I'd like to do now is give you a nickel definition of design. And I'm slightly reluctant to do this because there are many people in this audience who know more than I do about design. So I look forward to them tearing this definition apart. (But think design, and I'll tell you why I put it in these terms.) Think of design simply, simplistically, as the putting together of visual elements in an effective way. The putting together of visual elements in an effective way. All right, putting together. What does putting together involve? Putting together involves selection, you have to make choices, you have to make selections. And to make those selections you have to know what

to choose from.

I had an editor, who's been in the business three or four years, which is long enough you'd think to know a little bit about book design, comment to me after I had complimented a jacket which I thought was beautifully designed (I thought the typehandling was marvelous). This editor said to me, "Well, how come the big T and the little T? Are the big T and the little T from the same kind of type?" It takes a while to even figure out what the question was. The big T was a display cursive Italic. The little T was a Roman small cap. "The big T and the little T." You don't even know where to begin to answer such a question. As if there's a box full of T's that you sort out and put together. Obviously, editors aren't making those decisions. The fact of the matter is that there are hundreds of typefaces, I suppose thousands is more accurate. And designers need to know, somebody needs to know that, if they are going to put these elements together. They've got to be knowledgeable.

Another aspect of this putting together, and again here the designers in the room can correct me. I tried to figure out on a picturebook, a 32 page picturebook, the number of separate, and yet related decisions, choices, that have to be made by a designer. And I'm talking about things, not all necessarily made by a designer, but decisions that are made that affect the design. There's trim size; to get trim size you're going to pick a type. Once you pick a type you have to pick the display, you have to pick the type size, the face, the lettering, the placement on the page. I figured out that there are roughly 30 to 50 decisions that have to be made, choices that have to be made. And they're related choices. You can't just decide "Well, I like that typeface" and then not think of that in terms either of the art that's on the page or the trim size or anything else. So, that requires a great deal of experience and a great deal of knowledge to make those decisions. So that's the putting together aspect of it.

Putting together the visual elements. Well, what are the visual elements? Again, very simplistically, I think there are three. When I talked to Ken this afternoon there were two, but I thought of another one. Again, I'm being very simplistic about this. There's line, I think type can be described as <u>line</u>; there's <u>color</u>, black, white and everything in between; and there's--this is the third one--space, two dimensional space or, to state it easily, <u>the page</u>. You don't just take and put those letters on an endless plain of white or anything else; they are on a contained plane, a two-dimensional space. I've already suggested some of the complications with type--you have to know an awful lot about type. Most of what we're used to looking at when we look at, when we talk about color, not in picturebooks but otherwise, is black and white. The black is the type, the black line is the type, the white is the page, or some variation on that. But then most books, for example most novels, are printed in black and white, although some of you may have seen a book recently that got an enormous amount of atten-

tion, The Neverending Story, printed in red and green, green, I think. It's real hokey. At any rate, we were talking about black and white. But then when we start talking about picturebooks then you have color and there is another element involved in that and that is the art: the images that are on the page. Okay, the knowledge involved and the sensitivity and the taste (difficult word to define) that's involved in knowing how to put these little black lines on the page next to these colors and these shapes, is again, considerable.

Finally the third element that I suggested is the putting together of visual elements in an effective way; which is not to say that every putting together of visual elements is effective, or that the effect is the effect that you wanted to achieve. But, it seems to me that there are two aspects to that that are worth considering. One effective way of putting these elements together is to achieve an effect which is pleasing, or to use an element that you like or looks nice. I mean you've all looked at books in foreign languages where you didn't have a clue what they meant but they were attractive. So, to a certain extent I think we're talking about aesthetics there, the aesthetic sense that's involved. But then there's another effective way of putting elements together, and this is where I think we're getting at the special province of picturebooks, and that is putting them together in a way that is not only pleasing but meaningful. And here we're talking about semantics. It seems to me that normally semantics is applied to words, to language. But it seems to me in an area for critics to think about is that there is a real semantic element in the juxtaposition of type and picture and image. And that time and time again what you see in the best picturebooks is a case where all of the meaning is not just in the type, in the text, in the words. Nor is it just in the illustrations but it's somehow enhanced by the juxtaposition, by the design. In fact, by the putting together of those two, and then to pick up where Ken left off, putting them in a sequence. This is awfully abstract to talk about without actually having a book shining on the wall to show you. But I think that finally what we're talking about are different modes, the verbal and the visual, different modes of meaning, significance; and that's finally what I'm talking about—the significance of design, which is something that can only be talked about in specific terms.

All right, why have I taken you through this fairly laborious and naive definition? Because what I really want to talk about is, again, design in the context of publishing. It would be wonderful if one person could sit down and make a book, from soup to nuts so that you had a completely integrated and coherent vision. I don't know that there is any one person that does all the things that are done in the process of publishing a book. Let me tell you what those things are and then I'll go through them step by step. There is first, not necessarily foremost, the author, the person who writes the book, conceives the story. Then there is the illustrator, and I'm talking about picturebooks obviously, the person who conceives the story in terms of images. They may be the same person obviously, but there are two different things going on

there. Then, in a publishing house, it just so happens that the way the power system is set up there's got to be an editor involved someplace. The books get submitted and an editor has to like one or have some faith in what's going on there and decide to take a book on. And so there is an editor involved in every case. That's the one where I break down. I can't think of many author/illustrators, even if they are the same person, who are also the editor. Walter Lorraine. I don't know if he writes but I know he illustrates, so he might be a special case. I couldn't think of anybody else. Then there is the designer who does what I just went through the long process of. And finally, I may be skipping somebody, but then finally there is the person or the people who are responsible for and involved in the production of the book, the people who actually put it together and make it, print it. I suppose I could go on endlessly and say that there are the pressmen because many a good book has met its death at the hands of the pressman who wasn't quite there. And then some books that have had some help from pressmen, too; I don't mean to take it out on them.

But, at any rate, you have these five aspects of this process and what I'd like to suggest here, of course, doesn't apply to anybody here, because everybody here works in perfect accord with everybody else here. But there are places where the whole procedure gets a little complicated. You're dealing with creative people, you're dealing with personalities, and you're dealing with skilled people and their skills, and sometimes those things all don't necessarily work out. And what I'd like to do is, I'm not telling tales out of school, I'd just like to suggest some of the complexity, in fact some of the fun that takes place behind the scenes. These are really all fun; the people I'm talking about, whose names I will not mention to protect the guilty, would not object. One name I will mention is Garth Williams, who is at a conference someplace. You all know him; he's a legendary illustrator. An after dinner speech was over and someone raised a hand and said "Mr. Williams, could you please tell us who your favorite authors are, living or dead." And Garth thought for a second and said "Dead." Which I thought was pretty good for Garth.

The author's involvement in the design of the book can be more or less productive. You've all heard the discussion about why you don't put authors and illustrators together while books are being made. I don't really want to get involved in that discussion. It just so happens that in publishing frequently the person who has written the book and the person who is illustrating it never speak to each other. Some speak to each other--and never speak to each other again. Again I want to talk in terms of how these things relate to design. I recently had an author, a very well known author, come in talking about a particular book and saying "The designer is going to have a wonderful, wonderful time with this book. I know exactly what I want it to look like." Okay. Think about it. And he does know exactly what he wants the book to look like and the designer's going to have a great time doing it. What you have is a case here where, again, it would be wonderful if this

person, if the author, had the skills of designing. As it happens, he doesn't, and so a designer would have to be involved. But the designer is a creative artist. And to be told that you're going to have great fun but this is exactly what I want, and of course it won't be exactly what the person wants because if he knew exactly what he wanted he would be a designer; he'd know how to put the pieces together. Many authors, by the way, don't care, literally, they just really aren't that interested. I mean they want the book to look beautiful but they wouldn't know Baskerville from Helvetica if they tripped over it, and, well they might if they saw it, say they didn't like it. At any rate, many don't want to be involved in it. Sometimes they do.

Then there's the illustrator. Frequently illustrators are pretty good designers because they have that sense of the visual, of how to put things together, and they're educated in that way and sensitive in that way. So I'll tell a story that worked the other way around. This is a case where an illustrator had received a text that had been set, the type had already been chosen, and working in conjunction with the designer (in fact this illustrator was doing the designing) the dummy was laid out, the text placed and the illustrator did the full color dummy. This happens to be a book that was being pre-separated, so that in order for the author to understand what it was going to look like he couldn't do just lines, he had to put the color in. Okay, so this completely worked out colored dummy was sent off to a vacation spot with the editor and the author, who, after a long weekend and many gin and tonics, decided that they were going to fix this book a little bit. It came back with the following suggestions.

First, could not many of those marvelous little spots with all the white margin around them be turned into full page bleeds? Second, text from some of the pages had been moved so that suddenly you'd have a spread that was turned into a wordless spread where there had been text before. And third, some of the text had been rewritten. Now, if you're an illustrator out there or designer, you realize that these are not simple, subtle changes that have been taking place. They're rather major. The illustrator was given the task then of basically reconceiving about half the book to adapt to these changes. The concern, then, of course, was what if once the book had been reconceived it went back and they came up with more embellishments and improvements! They didn't.

The third person involved is an editor. An editor has, in some respects, all together too much involvement in certain aspects of a book. I think it's safe to say that the average trade editor's knowledge of type, just type (I won't talk other more refined aspects of design) is exceeded by these four terms: Italic, Roman, upper case and lower case. And their vocabulary might not go that far, although they can appreciate those terms because they're copying editing terms. I don't think this is true, by the way, of children's book editors, generally, because they are almost always working with books that have a

much stronger design element in them than the straightforward novel that is just text. But the fact of the matter is that I am an editor and I used to say things to designers like "I don't like it." "Why don't you like it?" "It's too, too loose." As if there's something wrong with loose and as if somehow loose is okay, but too loose isn't. You know, I didn't have a clue what to say, so I taught myself enough of the basics at least. Now I shut up rather than say anything at all. But frequently editors who are involved in overseeing a design (in fact the design frequently goes to an editor for approval) don't have a clue about what to say, and they respond on the purely subjective level. And then a designer somehow has to deal with all this. I think designers should get paid a lot of money, or something to make them put up with all this.

Frequently, the editor, however, does serve the function of mediating between a well known author and a well known illustrator. Here's a case in point. In this particular book, that little poem you all know about: a peanut who sat on a railroad track and a train hit it and it turned into peanut butter. The author said, "Wonderful, this is hilarious. Can't you see it, you put a peanut on the railroad track, the train comes along, hits it, that's funny." The illustrator looked and said "What do you want me to do? You want me to put a peanut on a railroad and have the train hit it? This is going to be funny?" Absolutely, totally mismatched senses of humor. So I suppose an editor has the function there but still, in terms of design, many editors don't really know what they're looking at. There is the designer, whom I've already talked about and I won't say any more about. And then finally, there's the complicated business of the production. And in many publishing houses the people in design and the people in production are the same people, that is, the person who is overseeing the production is the designer. In many houses the designers are completely different; they work on their own. In some houses the designer is freelance. At our house we freelance a lot of the design and the designer may be in Omaha and never has any involvement with the production type. But the production people really are the end product. They're the people who have to see that the book can be, in fact, manufactured. I think it's true to say, to get back to my notion of commerce and art, that every designer, when a book is being designed, realizes that there are a number of restraints that are imposed on the book. And many of those restraints are purely economic. They have to do with trim size of the book, they have to do with the quality of the paper involved, they have to do with the type setter. I designed a book at one point in my early days and I was enchanted with the design only to discover, when I went into the production department, that the printer we worked with didn't have this typeface. And so I had to go back to the type book they told me in the first place I had to look in and redesign the book in a different typeface. That's when I freelanced the design to somebody else. There are a number of constraints. There's a printing process now which is very inexpensive because they use plastic plates. Well these plates, after they've run for not too very long, start to wear down and the most

beautiful design, especially if you're using the typeface that has very thin hard edges, can be destroyed by this printing process after a while. Or by using a very inexpensive rag paper that doesn't absorb the ink in a regular way--suddenly everything gets soft on you. And what was a beautiful design can be turned into sort of mud. All of these aspects of the printing process are part of that knowledge that the design people have to be aware of.

So the point of all this is to suggest that when you see a beautifully made book come out, there's a little bit of the miraculous involved. I know young children are always fascinated by this printing/publishing process. They see an artist doing a book and they think that artist does 20,000 copies of that book, one after the other. And they're always amazed that there are 20,000 of them. Well, I have to say they're no more amazed than I am that there are 20,000 copies of these things because there's an awful lot involved and an enormous number of factors that are related that you folks never know about. In fact, the critical reception of these books is often outrageous. I recently saw some reviews of what I thought was one of our finer picturebooks that says "Do not recommend to buy. It's too much for 13 pages of not very good art." That was the summary of the whole thing. It in fact involves the commerce and the art that I was talking about before. So the point is that there are many people involved and many choices and processes and factors involved, all of which only provide the context for the books that come out that you'll be seeing more of. I think, personally, and I'm just adding this on, that the picturebook is potentially the most complex form of book making going on today, because it involves so many disparate elements and it involves so much knowledge and basic teamwork on the part of the people who are putting the books together. I think that the most exciting things that you're seeing in publishing today in terms of book arts (that are available to the majority of the public) are picturebooks. And I recommend you to the picturebooks you're about to hear about because they are some of the best. Thank you.

David Godine:

I don't want to duplicate what Stephen said which I thought was most appropriate and pretty much the way it is. My definition of a publisher, just for your edification, is that a publisher is someone who makes a book public. And that I take to be my primary and indeed sometimes my sole responsibility. There are 45,000 books published in this country every year. Probably 39,000 of them are in effect "priveished," that is, they sink between the cracks of time without a trace. And when you have a small list, such as mine, I think what you try to do in every respect is, first of all, set your books apart however you can from the hoi polloi. And to try to build a distinctive image for yourself, for your company; an identity or mission, if you will, for the people you work for and for the people who come to know your books is

something one holds special and different. That's my definition. My mother's definition of a publisher was: she said one time "David, this seems to be the only profession in the world which allows you to indefinitely postpone the responsibility of making a career decision." Which I think came from my grandmother who whenever I met her would always say "I like what you do dear, but what are you going to do when you grow up?"

I want you to keep that definition of making books public in mind because we tend to forget how many books really are published every year in this country, how difficult it is to keep books in print, how difficult it is to bring any book before the eye of the public to make it talked about, to make it, as it were, an event. And how much time and effort, above and beyond what happens when the book is finally printed and goes in the warehouse, goes into getting those books into your hands, and into your eyes, and into your minds. That's where some of the best books in the world, as you well know, go astray. You know how far they go astray because you go into bookstores and you see them stuck on remainder tables for $2.98. Children's books we went into three years ago, against the concerted advice of all of my directors. I've a very tough board. There's only one director in the entire board who thought we should do children's books. It's a very competitive market, number one, and it's a very expensive market. It is an expensive thing to produce children's books. They require color and we have never done a "pre-separated book". When we take on an artist we do the separations, we tend to print on good paper, we like Steven Smythe on all our books, which means they're held together with little pieces of thread and not little chunks of glue. We bind them for the most part in full cloth and most of them are in at least two colors and many of them are in four colors. To do a novel today, manufacturing costs will run us between $10,000 and $15,000 for a normal run; a normal run for us being 3,000-5,000 copies, and I'm not talking about a blockbuster. Just to get the presses rolling on our children's book like this one we just did by Bill Steig will require all new separation, at least 24 full page color plates within it. Before we even start the presses rolling we're in for $20,000. That's before we've bought paper, or printed or bound or paid Mr. Steig a nickel of royalty. Those are called pre-plan costs and a normal children's book can be staggering.

But here are the things that I think separate children's book publishing from the rest of the trade. The first thing you learn in publishing, if you've been in it for more than three months, is that personalities move the age more than principles. Probably true in any business but it's really true in publishing. My principles are probably exactly the same as Mr. Doubleday's, who owns the Mets and numerous other peripheral entertainment devices. If you ask Mr. Doubleday what Doubleday stood for, I'm sure he would enumerate in precisely the same terms as I what a wonderful list Doubleday has, how much he cares about his authors and his books. Nonetheless, there is a world of difference between Mr. Doubleday's books and mine, as there are indeed between Mr.

Doubleday's books and Stephen's. It is the personality at the head of the house that makes the difference, always, invariably in publishing. Publishing is not a manufacturing industry, it is a brain intensive industry. People with singular taste, the children's book people, are not bullied by the publisher in charge, and they're not bullied as a general rule for a very good reason. And that's because if you look at the profit and loss statement of a publishing house you will find children's book publishing is the singular most profitable part of the business. It is the business that floats a house like Harper and Row. I know that. Twenty million dollars in sales but 40% of the profit in the trade division comes from Harper and Row's children's book list. And that's true at Houghton Mifflin and it's probably true at Farrar Straus. It's true in my company. We put a lot of money into children's books, not only because we like them or we like the authors, but because we make a lot of money in children's books.

That brings me to the second point. Children's books have legs. By that I mean if you do a good children's book, that children's book will be around year in and year out. Sure the first year you may sell 15,000 copies but then it doesn't drop off to zero as it does with a novel or with a lot of nonfiction. It drops off to maybe 7,000 or 8,000 copies. We publish two books, three or four books like this, but two I'll mention: Dylan Thomas' Child's Christmas in Wales and Peter and the Wolf. Each one of those books sells like clockwork 10,000 copies a year, we can just count on it. It's like money in the bank. And to know that you have a book in your back list every year that will sell that many copies gives me at least a half an hour sleep a night. I mean I think the rest of publishing, particularly in difficult corners like poetry, and publishing of short stories, really does have a quality of defeat about it which is almost Dante-esque in the purity of its hopelessness. We try and try to figure out ways to make poetry pay for itself. We have yet to really come up with a solution. But by doing children's books like this we can really pay for a lot of poetry, we can pay for a lot of those corners of our publishing which we think are important which will never, never be able to support themselves.

Number three, what you should remember about children's books is that they're not children's books. We say they're children's books but children don't buy children's books. You buy children's books. Adults buy children's books and we tend to forget that. You don't give your children $13.95 and say go down to the store and buy yourself a nice children's book. We might do that with a paperback, but by and large you do the purchasing; the librarian does the purchasing. These are among the few aspects of publishing where the ultimate purchaser is not the ultimate reader. And therefore we're really not designing these books for children, although they are read by children. But they're not reviewed by children, they're not bought by children, and they're not reordered by children. Of course, if the book is a failure, and I'll give you some examples of real failures there, they're failures because they fail to work as children's books. I mean children are very dis-

criminating and are a very unforgiving market. But nonetheless, the ultimate decision to buy or not to buy is not made on the basis of any experience or any market testing with the child. The librarian doesn't go in with a Steig book and hand it to a seven year old and say "Do you like it, dear? Shall I order it?" They read the reviews in School Library Journal; they read the reviews in P.W. and librarians who buy these books (there are probably lots of them here will take offense at this statement) will barely go to the bathroom without reading in a review in a library journal that it's okay to do so. They are the most timid constituency in the world. We know this, because when we get an ALA Notable Award all of a sudden 2,000 books fly out the door. Believe me folks, it was the same book before we got the ALA Notable. To laughter it was crowned with glory, by this magazine, but did the children's book editors and librarians order it on their own? No, they waited for the review. That's a very important fact and an unfortunate fact to remember because so many of our sales are in fact to libraries and to institutions. They don't go as the rest of our list does primarily into book stores. Most of these books end up on library shelves.

Fourthly, production and design always takes the rap in the publishing house. This is not unique to children's books. What happens, as a scenario, is the editor goes up with the author and/or the agent and they say "Gee, you know you paid $5,000 for the last book that sold 10,000 copies; you won back the advance. Don't you think you should pay $8,000 for this one? And the royalty started at 7.5%; don't you think you should go to 8.5%." And you the editor, feeling in an exceptionally benign mood (after all, the book did make money; you did recoup your investment), "Sure, I'll pay $8,000 for this and I'll start at 8.5%." And you go back to the publisher and the publisher says "That sounds like a good idea." Somewhere down the line it comes to manufacturing. And somewhere down the line you're realizing, my god, nobody costed out this book. Nobody knew the complexity, nobody knew that the author was a certified neurotic and the illustrator has got marital problems and the printer went on strike and they stopped making the paper that we ordered. Everything has gone wrong, and what happens in a publishing house is you just stick it to manufacturing. They'll say now you have to save the money, you have to bring us in a cheaper book. This can't go above a $1.20, or whatever it is, because we have to sell it for $7.95. And that's, I think, by and large a lot of the reason you see such badly manufactured books, because what happened at the front end of the process is that we gave away the store, and at the back end of the process is where we're trying to save mills. Mills, hundreds of pennies, that's how books are costed out. I guess what I'm doing is defending manufacturing and design against the encroachment of management. Because management understands those costs. Management, I mean Stephen's right, probably can't tell a Serif from a Seraphim. But they can zero in on the manufacturing cost of the book, and say "it's $1.29 and we're pricing it for $2.95; we're going to lose our shirts in this. Save me 25 cents."

Lastly, and this should obviate everything you've heard before, good books really succeed almost despite themselves and bad books will fail almost despite your best efforts. By that I mean we have found that if we really believe in a book and if the book really is good, that all of these decisions about whether we use coated paper or uncoated paper, whether we sew the book or whether we don't sew the book, become immaterial once the book has sold 25,000 copies. After all, by that time, all your costs have been written off, you're in seventh heaven because you're going back to your second or your third printing. If it's a bad book, no matter what you do will not save it. In other words, shaving a nickel or shaving 20 cents off the manufacturing is not going to make the book sell more. Reducing the price from $11.95 to $9.95 is not going to make the book sell more. You can reduce the book price of a bad book (and we have done it) from $9.95 to $2.95 and you still can't give it away. So, that's one side of the coin; and the other side of the coin, which is the treacherous side of publishing, is we never, never know. We really don't know. Publishers don't know what is going to work and what isn't going to work. We pretend we know, we talk about the track record of the author, we talk about books with a similar nature, we talk about the pricing structure and the market niche. We go to sales conferences and we go through a long song and dance with quotas and how many they're going to get out. But I think Stephen would back me up, by and large, with an author who is not a totally known quantity, such as James Michener, John McPhee, we don't know when we publish a book whether it's going to sell 5,000 copies or 15,000 copies or 20,000 copies. And believe me, we guess wrong in both directions; we guess the book will bomb and the book succeeds, and we guess just as frequently that the book will succeed and the book bombs.

So, I don't want to come across as sounding as though I know the answers because the more I'm in the business the more I know that the longer I've been in the business the less I know about what I should know the most about, namely what I should be publishing. I think, you know, all you can do in the long run is publish what you believe in and do your crying in private. You know, every book is a risk. It's why publishing can never expand to the size of a Doubleday without failing because every book, as Stephen said, requires an immense amount of action, of vectors intercepting, of many, many people working on it. And remember we, little Godine; little Godine, we publish 40 books a year. That's an enormous amount of product. I mean I was amazed last week the Gillett Company won a national award for bringing out the most number of products; they brought out 29 new products. Houghton Mifflin brings out 600 new books a year. And each one of those is a new product. It's never been market tested. It shines its little face on earth and sometimes a ray of sunshine comes down and hits it but more often it is obscured by a cloud and sort of just passes into total obscurity. So, I'm talking fast, but I hope you realize that this really is a crap shoot we're talking about. You know, it's an exciting crap shoot that we all love; but basically when we do a book we try to do the best we can and then we just fly on a wing and a prayer.

What I'd like to do now, because I'd like to get you out of here in 10 minutes, is to take you through just some examples of book design. This is something I'm very interested in because I really started in book design. We started as printers, not publishers. We ran presses, letter presses to be sure; but we were in manufacturing before we came to publishing. So the quality of the book and how things look is very important to us. And I'd like to give you a very personal tour through a few of the books we've published and tell you why I think in some cases they succeeded and in many cases why they've failed.

I'll just show you these two because I think Maurice Sendak is one of the few people around who is capable of writing a children's book, illustrating a children's book and to the best of my knowledge, really participating in the typography of the children's book. I think he is a writer unique in his interest in process, in illustration, in typography and in words. And I think his books get better and better, and here's an example of his latest one which I'm sure most of you know. Here's one that Farrar Straus did. I love it because there's a typographer breaking the rules. That's not lettering spaced in traditional ways and yet it really works extremely well. It's very legible. You see how he's mitered that "y" right into the "b". Type doesn't come that way. You realize type, at least real type, and by real type I mean type cast in metal, cannot be set that tight. That can only be done by cutting out the repro and basically pasting it up in that way of setting it in film. That's a type face I'll come back to because I think it's particularly beautiful and inspirationally designed by Eric Gill.

I'll talk a little bit about our children's books, some that worked and some which didn't work. What you see in the right hand screen is a hard cover edition of this book. And what you see in the left is a soft cover, both with exactly the same illustration on them. The one on the right I think not very successful, partially because of the contrast of the red against the blue which really vibrates and partially because of how much of the illustration, as you see, was lost in the reproduction. The illustrations are by Jean Titherington who works with a very fine and very hard pencil. So she's very difficult to reproduce. What we did as you see in the paperback is we reset the type, I think very successfully in terms of the full caps, and badly in terms of Andrew Lang (the author) which actually is much too tight. But I think that jacket on the left is a much more successful jacket, and you can judge yourself, I have both books here. Here's another example. What you see in the left is what we gave the salesman to sell the book. You have to realize that these books are sold long before they're produced. And when a salesman goes into a store he has maybe 35 seconds to give a spiel; and he usually gives a spiel with a proof or something like that of a jacket. So this was actually something I set in my barn. The Storyteller is a really wonderful Bruce Rodger design, and the other type is in Benbo. When the book was finally designed by Katie Westray she picked up, as you can see, the display type, The Storyteller, and then we set Thirteen Tales by Saki in full caps; I think that's a much

better jacket. You see, too, what's very interesting here is the enormous difference, using the four color separation and what you can get for a proof. Look at the difference in color between the illustrations, and again Jean Titherington's design. And you wouldn't think that they were the same drawing. Here, I think, is a particularly lovely jacket. I usually detest English printing. This was printed very nicely but the jacket was terrible. It was a book of extinct animals and I wanted to call it a Naturalist in Necrology. But that was voted down. So we called it As Dead as a Dodo.

The copyright pages and colophon pages are usually exceedingly ugly and there is no need for them to be; and what we tried to do in this book was to design a colophon page (mainly who printed the book, etc., author information) in an attractive way. What's interesting about this book of course is that the paper is not that cream color; it's white, it's the color of the border around the picture. It's a true white paper. What we had to do was trap all of that with the printing which was a fifth press run in a flat color. I show you these just to show you how beautiful I think calligraphy can be. Up until 1950 calligraphy was very difficult to incorporate into American book production because most books were produced by letter press and to reproduce calligraphy you had to have a line cut made and you had to print it from a line cut. Today, almost everything is printed offset; there's no reason why we can't use calligraphy on our title pages, on our jackets, on our spines. This is a particularly lovely example of calligraphy by Georg Lars. Again, it had a ghastly enlarged jacket, and what was very interesting here is that when we got the film from the finished book we said, oh my god this is so bad, we don't think we can even use it. The printing was so horrible, it was done on sort of a dull matte paper. Everything was washed out, I mean the caps were barely readable, sort of this horrible mauve, and the yellow was sort of completely bled out. We gave the film to a good printer, we picked a good paper for it and it just snapped to life. It was not the problem of the film at all, it was just the problem of the paper and the printer. So don't be too quick to judge.

Bird, Beast and Flower was a wonderful book with Maria Angel. I think she's the best miniaturist alive today. I brought a copy of this book; I urge you, who are not familiar with her work, to look at it. She does these drawings on vellum and they are very, very small and they are absolutely exquisite. She, I think, is the best miniaturist; if Anne of Cleves was alive Maria Angel would be the person she would commission.

Two more examples of I think very nice and appropriate calligraphy: Peter and the Wolf again by Georg Lars, and very typographic, I think, in its feeling. And the Firebird by Richard Lipton and again I think we want it to look Russian, we want it to have activity. And we wanted a dark blue background to pick up the Firebird itself. And I think that jacket works a lot better than you would infer from looking at this slide. A very handsome jacket.

This is a very bled out slide, I apologize, but these are the problems you deal with when you're dealing with double page (double trucks, we call them) spreads. The artist really conceives these as paintings which extend across the gutter. When you manufacture the book you first have to make sure of course that the binder lines those two pages up perfectly, which isn't always very easy for a binder if he's binding 20,000 copies of the book. And secondly, you have to make sure that the registration in the gutter is absolutely perfect so that the point in fact really does carry across the page. And I think it worked out quite well in both of these spreads. One a lovely illustration by George Kaschinowitz of Christina Rosetti's wonderful plan and on the right hand screen a new book by Bill Steig called Rotten Island. A totally re-separated and redone and just printed reissue. We'll notice, too, he used very classical type. We don't use clunky type which is so often seen in children's books. I don't think children's eyes are any different than ours; they're not going to go through life reading extra bold type, Venus Extra Bold Extended. Why subject their little eyes and their little minds to abominations of type design and also to faces which they'll never see again for the rest of their natural born days? So we try to acquaint them with classical, usually monotype designs. We actually set most of our books in monotype, that is, individual letters set in a machine. We do this because monotype is, in my opinion and that of any typographer who knows his salt, the best type that has ever been designed in terms of both its fit and in terms of integrity of the letter. And, secondly, for a children's book what are you going to pay for a 48 page book? Maybe 1,800 lines maximum. You're going to pay $600. You're going to put that over an edition of 15,000 copies, and it comes to pennies a copy. Why save a hundred dollars to set it in some dumb computer face which is so ugly and so useless as a type face? That's where false economy comes in, you see. The average children's book probably costs us $300-$350 to set. The average printing is 10,000 copies; that's under 3 cents a book.

Here's a book that was a wonderful jacket, totally done by Joe Suvelo for a book that was done last year that was quite successful called Trouble in Buglands. So successful that it was out of print the day after we published it; we didn't have enough money to reprint it. And I love the drawing on the right which is not in backwards but you see he's very cleverly figured out that the type has to go the wrong way because they're inside the carriage looking out. What these are are Inspector Mantis Mysteries, and Mantis of course is Sherlock Holmes and he's a praying mantis. I love that jacket; I mean that's totally different from anything we've ever done and I think it has great life and great style and great color to it.

Here are some things to show you that are not at all very classy. Here are two more, children's books designed as children's books and designed by I think a genius with an airbrush by the name of Leslie Cabaga. They're really puzzles that children do. But I think those are really wonderful, commercial, lively. These are books, remember, that

sell for $4.95. They have to be displayed face out. We sell them in three packs which means we sell them ten at a crack. So we have to give the bookstore something which is visually attractive, financially appealing, and which sells. In other words, we can't be too classy.

This was our edition of the Velveteen Rabbit--a little bit wishy-washy, I'll admit. Sold extremely well, this book didn't go out of copyright last year, although there were four different editions that came out simultaneously. We, Knopf; Holt, Rinehart & Winston; and Simon & Schuster all published an edition of Velveteen Rabbit in the same period. But you know how it is in children's books. Bunny, bunny.

On the right is a wood cut by Mary Azarian; this is an address book that we had her do following the success of Farmer's Alphabet. Mary Azarian is a lovely artist who lives in northern Vermont, studied with Leonard Baskin, cuts a raw pine and cuts 12 months of the year as far as I'm concerned. She is just prolific and wonderful. And that address book is done very well. I did bring some copies; I urge you to look at the wood cuts inside, they're really wonderful. I guess what I love about an artist like that is she's really using a methodology which has almost disappeared from illustration: wood cutting and wood engraving. Of course most 19th century and even early 20th century children's books were illustrated with wood engravings and wood cuts. You think they're chromolithographs but they're not; they're really wood engravings done so well and in so many precisely registered colors, they come across looking like lithographic prints. But most of them, in point of fact, are wood engravings, and there aren't many artists alive today, there are darn few artists alive today, who can really handle a knife or a buren in those traditions. As a matter of fact, it's a lot easier today to do a children's book illustration than it was 50 years ago, it really is, because of offset, which is an inherently inferior process.

This is an artist that we found, not a great success story I have to tell you. Ron Chadalbash--I loved his drawings, they're photo-realistic, a little bit in the Chris Van Allsberg tradition, but he's got a better sense of humor I think. Here's an example of a book that we really overproduced. We did both these books in duotone. We priced them at $8.95, which was crazy. We printed 7,000 and sold maybe 2,000. We lost our shirts in both cases. I don't regret it for a minute. But there's an artist who, I hope, that after we publish maybe his fifth book will acquire a following. A wonderful artist, works from photographs. Very difficult to reproduce graphite drawings like this because of the reflection from the graphite, we have to use a Polaroid lens to shoot it. I'll show you some of his drawings, full size. This is about a little girl who wakes up and she's given magic hats by her grandmother. The basic story line is she goes to the movies, she participates in the Laurel and Hardy films, in the Griffith films and she becomes a character actor in some of the great classic films with Charlie Chaplin. Here she's leaving the house. She's going in this case to the movie with her magic hats.

Now here is a case of pre-separation. An old Crockett-Johnson book which I loved called Ellen's Lion and we had a copy of the book but of course no film existed for this book. Question was how could we do the book economically in two, not four colors. What you see are two colors and if you look at the right hand screen, for instance, you see the yellow, and the black which is a second. Then you see the gray, on the chair for instance, which is the black screened down to 20% and then you see the dark orange in the hair and the pants and Ellen, which is a combination of the orange and the black, both screened down and both combined. This of course requires a lot of cutting of ozilids in perfect registration but I think it shows you what can be done very creatively with just two colors and what the poor artists who will have to pre-separate their books have to go through to get results, I have to say, much more complicated and difficult than this.

Here's a book sort of start to finish. This was a second book by Mary Azarian called The Tale of John Barleycorn. I love this. You, I'm sure, all know this song about how you plant barley and it turns into beer. And this got the dumbest reviews of any book we ever published because we made the mistake--I guess it was a mistake--of including in the preface, which was as innocent as anything I can think of, very rudimentary directions on how to make beer. Every children's book librarian in America picked up on it. Should you be telling little children how to make beer?! And you know, at that point you just want to go "Oh my god." What do they think; little kids are going to make beer in the bathtub? But anyway, that's what they all say. Let me go back, anyway; there you see a two color job. Those are the wonderful endpapers she designed for the book. You can see, I hope, the boards covered with a very nice colored paper with a cloth spine. We usually go full cloth, but in this case we really wanted to stamp the book. I didn't have a thing to show you, but we stamp them in gold with the sheaf of barley in the actual board with the lozenge shape. It was very, very beautiful. These were endpapers. All of this, remember, was cut in wood and separated by her. Now I'll show you some of the spreads. Here is the title page. This was calligraphed by Georg Lars, not set in type; the whole book was written out. I think we paid for this entire book maybe $275 for Georg Lars' work which is absolutely wonderful. And there you see, look at the borders. Every border is different, every corner is different, and that's not the most difficult. There's a wonderful wood cut, sort of looking down, a bird's eye view. The initial, she cut; each verse has a new initial and as you see, and as I said every border. Again, a wonderful challenge for the binder because you had both these double truck pages, the whole design goes right across the page and has to line up perfectly. And you also have pages, such as the one on the right, where the two distinct frames also have to be perfect (not only in the same color, the same density of ink) but also they had to be aligned properly in the bindery. Nice job by them.

This is fun. This is what makes publishing, I guess, what keeps you

coming back again and again. We got a call from a woman, who was obviously slightly peculiar, but you know she had most of herself in gear. And she said "I've been working on designs for Petrushka the ballet, and I wonder if you would like to do a book about Petrushka." And we said, well does it have a story? And she said "I'm not doing it as a story, I'm doing it as a cut out book. You know, complete with stage, complete with the characters; I've done all the research. This was from the original Ballet Russe production put on by Diaghalev, with Stravinsky's music and with Bakst designs, 1911, great cause celebre." She had found the original designs in the library of the New York City ballet and she was an artist; but she was also sort of an engineer with paper. She says "I'm going to put together sort of a package for you guys to do a cut out for Petrushka." And you know you hear these proposals every day and 99% of them are absolutely foolery, but she sounded legit and we said "Well come on up here and bring your drawings." And her drawings were just staggeringly beautiful.

They're doing the Nutcracker this year, which I wish we had slides of, equally gorgeous. But this is what she had done. She figured out not only different borders for 22 of these sets, if you will, plus an entire stage that folds up, folds together. All of the characters in their original costumes. It's an absolutely wonderful package. It really is a package and it's a package that we all got very excited about. Could not print it in this country; had to print it in Singapore. And of course, to sell this to a bookstore you can't go in because it takes too long to explain what it is; they don't understand it. You have to bring them a set completely constructed and say this is what it looks like. Of course we had to cut all this out, take a photograph of it and then the bookstores all said, "Well we'll never be able to explain this to the customers but if you can give us a set." So what we did was we called the Massachusetts Commission for Disabled Children. We had about 30 kids in, you know, mostly teenagers but with learning disabilities or something and we bought scissors, we bought 30 pairs of scissors and we had a big picnic. We just cleaned out the office and for three days we had these kids cutting these things out and setting them up and shipping them off to stores. And finally, it did, it sold very well, because the stores did go to the trouble of setting them up. And once you see it set up you fall in love with it. So I wish I had more slides like that. It's truly beautiful. That's Jane Kendall--she's wonderful. This year we're doing The Nutcracker. Next year I won't tell you what we're doing but it's even better.

Ouestion: What makes the colors so saturated?

It's tough; mostly, believe it or not, very good printing in Hong Kong. We went through three stages of proofs and they really got it right. It has to be very dense, it can't look at all wishy-washy. And we used a very good paper. It's a coated paper, very heavy.

Ouestion: Why couldn't it be printed here?

There's just no way we could have afforded to do this book here. Who? It was the South China Printing Company, lovely people with offices in New York. This shows you one of the sets in the left hand slides. What's great about the book is, I think, it's historically accurate. I mean, it's not just her imagination gone wild, but really presents the original vast designs, right down to the pillow cases. She had figured out the stage designs and the set designs and they really work. For the Nutcracker she's devised a way that the Christmas tree folds up; it has pleats in it and it sort of goes down and there's a little string that goes up from the back stage and you pull the string and the tree climbs up though the ceiling. It's really wonderful.

Ava Weiss and Vera Williams:

Weiss: I am Ava Weiss.

I would like to know who we're talking to. Librarians? Children's librarians? Are there any working artists here? Anybody here interested in doing children's books themselves?

I'll tell you very quickly what the two of us thought we would do. I thought I would tell you what I do, and Vera would tell you what she does, and we would like to tell you how we work together. I would like to begin with what I do. I am not a designer. My title is Art Director. Now this is a totally meaningless term to most people. What do I actually do?

Greenwillow Books, which is a Children's Book division of William Morrow, specializes (I think I can say this) in books for very young children. It is our strength. We do books for the whole age range but out of a list of, say, 25 books we will do 22 picturebooks. So our strength and that which we really do very well, I think, is books for the very young child. And for an artist, which is what I am, that's a lot of fun because I work with art. I am, by training, an artist. I went to Cooper Union. I started working in book publishing houses. I had children. I worked as a freelance artist while my kids were growing up. I have illustrated. I have done hundreds of book jackets. I started out as a calligrapher.

(Sir, who was saying that there was no calligraphy used? David, those of us who went to Cooper Union and studied with George Salter....)

David Godine: Not enough calligraphy.

Weiss: ...and then did book jackets which were almost exclusively calligraphic because it was cheaper to use my labor than to use union labor in the type shops--but to pay somebody $250 for a whole book of calligraphy, David--we are going to have to have some words, you and I....

We do around 60 books a year--that's Greenwillow books. We are in our 10th year of existence. Before that I worked at Macmillan. Macmillan was one of my major freelance accounts and once I delivered some freelance work and was offered a job. And it sort of fell into place because my kids were old enough so that I felt I could leave them. I worked there for 10 years. We were asked by William Morrow whether we would like to start a division. Three of us went over and we have been very successful thanks to the talent we work with: because they have the one quality that we can't bring to books. We can bring expertise, we can bring enthusiasm, we can fight for them, we'll do everything. We cannot bring the creative spark; that has to come from the outside. Those of you who want to do books, it's what you have up here that we need. Everything else we can help you with. We can help you polish the words. We can help you do art work that's printable. We can do it all but we can't do that special quality that makes Vera - Vera, and Irene - Irene.

And it is my responsibility (in a very serious way) to worry about the graphic looks of the book from beginning to end so that we will talk about the size as well as the length even though the length doesn't really vary that much. We will talk about how much color, we will talk about the kind of book we think we ought to make out of this idea at the very front end; and then I work along with the artists mostly, all the way through until the book goes to press. The night before I came out here I was at a printer supervising the first printing of a book. I go to the printer with every single book that we publish for the first edition and when we've got a good press sheet, it gets an okay that goes into their job bag. If we reprint, that sheet has to be matched and it better be matched because I'm a very cheerful person and I'm very easy to work with, but these guys know that I kill if they don't watch my job. When I say I will kill, I mean I will reject the sheet. I will reject 10,000 or 15,000 sheets and the printer's stuck with them and the simple knowledge that I care enough to look makes them work that much harder. Monday morning I'm going to be on a plane to St. Louis. I'm going to be there for four days because we have books on press. We print all over the United States--we need printers who have presses that are large enough to put these books on. I haven't found a better way and I think it is this working along from beginning to end that allows us to keep up the quality. But it is an endless battle to do the very best that we possibly can.

On the other hand, Vera will work for six months on something. It is the least that we can do for her: to give her all the care at our end. For her to work for six months and for us to be sloppy would be inexcusable. So I work along with Vera and with others like her and let me assure you that there is no "artist," there is no "writer," there are only individuals, and each person is very different and each person has a very personal vision. We do not have a "look". We do not have a Greenwillow "look". We don't have books where you can say, "Ah, that has to be...." because we work with people who do all kinds of art work;

with people like Don Crews who is basically a designer; with Arnold Lobel; with Tana Hoban who is a photographer. We do the whole range. We do for each book what it needs. I think one of the interesting things about my job is that I have to know how to listen very hard not only to what people say but to what they don't say. I have to try to figure out what it is that they want in the end in a book so that I can help them realize it; each person has a different private vision of what they need to do and they can't necessarily carry it through to a printed page--especially young artists. With young artists, there is a tremendous gap between what they would like to do and what they can do for reproduction and everything we do is for reproduction. So part of my job is seeing a lot of portfolios and working with people who have never done a book before and helping them through the growing pains of learning the medium.

A book page is a very special thing--it has a way of working. It moves, it goes. I think Ken mentioned "cinematographic" yesterday. A good picturebook moves from beginning to end. It has a starting place and it goes from page to page, and where you place the type and where you don't place the type, and where you make a picture large and where you make it small determines the total feeling of the book and that structure underneath is enormously important. You can never undo that once you have that. Everything hangs from that.

I always say to people that they should be analytical and look at picturebooks and look at what's under them. There is in all good picturebooks a structure. For instance you have a recipe for how to do a gingerbread here (pointing to Williams' Gingerbread House). Now what is different about this book? There's a little story in the beginning, and there's a little story in the end, and the recipe is sandwiched into the middle. The graphic way of doing this is that we have the story with pictures and then, when we get to the recipe pages, there's a letter from grandpa. Then we begin to have these yellow--what should I call them? Borders? Patterns? Panels? Now this was Vera's idea. What she didn't know was how to do the finished art so that it would look like this. It was her first book and she is going to tell you how she got published with this. It is a wonderful story.

In this book (Williams' Three Days on a River in a Red Canoe) the feeling was intended to be that of a personal notebook--like a sketch book. So the type we chose, the typeface underneath (we chose this together) was a typeface that has a slight slant. It's not really Italic and has the kind of feeling as if a little kid wrote it. The art work was really done in crayons on little pieces of paper.

Williams: Colored pencils.

Weiss: Colored pencils. What I find so interesting about Vera for instance is that she is continually experimenting and so these two books look very different. This--which was a very successful book--was the

first; pieces came in and Vera wasn't really sure that her watercolors would work.

Williams: I was sure.

Weiss: You were sure; alright, okay. Vera was sure. She came in. I loved them. I thought they were wonderful. I really loved them. I was very excited. Other people in the office weren't so sure but we decided to trust her. It is a very different, very personal book--nobody else works like this. Vera's vision is a very personal vision; well, so is every other good artist's vision. They are individuals, so part of my job is listening to them and trying to get them to realize how to get their stuff in print.

Now we have put things up here on the wall (Williams' A Chair for My Mother, Something Special for Me, and Music, Music Everyone). This is the first, this is the second, and this is the third in a group of books. What you are looking at here are corrected color proofs.

Williams: This is what you see here, which is an uncorrected proof too.

Weiss: It will be the third in a group and this is what happens on press. These full color books are printed in four colors. This blue, which is called process blue or cyanide blue. Black--the type is in black, and very little of the image. Yellow. And red. The other proofs are combinations of these colors. These are "progressive proofs"; you'll notice that we have two jackets on the sheet and if you count these 16 pages--the other 16 pages are on the back. The jackets are cut off. They're finished with lamination or whatever the finish is. This piece is thrown away, unless we put a poster or something on there, and this is folded and folded and folded and folded; and if God is good to us starts with page one and ends with page 32. We have had everything happen, I think: we once did a book by Ezra Jack Keats where page 1, page 2, page 3 was followed by page 10, page 11--that's called a wrong binder's imposition and has nothing to do with anything except what particular machine at the bindery will get this sheet and how that machine is set up and is really out of our hands. The bindery sends what they call an imposition to the printer and they put the pages in like that.

Very briefly this is what I do: in picturebooks we basically work with two different kinds of books. We work with manuscripts for which we have to find illustrators and we work with artists who are their own writers. It does not happen the other way around, or very seldom. In other words writers don't illustrate--it is artists who write. There are several reasons I think why we tend to be so heavy in artists who write their own material. Picturebook manuscripts are devilishly difficult to write. They are so hard it is more like poetry than anything else. A good picturebook is a total interlocking of words and pictures,

and the author has to be able to leave spaces so that an illustrator can breathe. If the author writes everything, an illustrator has no place to go--they can just illustrate; no place to expand. To leave those kind of "holes", that is very hard to do. To have the imagination to write a text that consists of 17 words and see this in the back of your mind; just very few people can do it. There are some storytellers or people who were in the Library Sciences who end up writing manuscripts—you know, giving us texts--but by and large I think the proportion is maybe 1 out of 10. It is artists who started out as illustrators and said to themselves, "I have my own idea. I can do it." It gives them much better control because they can change, eliminate, add, do anything they like. Arnold Lobel always writes out a whole text and as he starts to do the art he starts to cross out lines, because you don't have to say it in words when you say it in pictures. That is a good picture-book, when the words and the pictures sort of dance together. In Vera's case this is, I think, very true.

The economic is not to be discounted. The way that people earn money in picturebooks--with all the major publishers (I can't talk about small places)--is with a royalty. The standard royalty is 10%. The publisher would divide this in many different ways but the total that we give is 10%. So if a book sells for $10, we figure a dollar for royalties. If Vera illustrates the text of someone equally well known they will share it fifty-fifty—5% and 5%. If Picasso had done the illustrations for your book you're going to get half of a percent and he would get 9 and a half percent.

So if Vera writes her own book she gets the whole 10%. That's not to be discounted; it does make a difference. But the need for the good text is important, because if a good text came around (and I mean a really good text) and we would offer it to any of the people that we work with, they might get excited and do it. It is not just economics. It has to do with the availability of good texts—they don't even have to be text, they can be ideas. They can be practically wordless but it's that special something that makes the book different. They're very hard to find, they really are. So when Vera one day stood in a line waiting to get in a movie... And I'll let her tell the story because she had never done a children's book before.

Williams: No, I had.

Weiss: Oh, that's right.

Williams: Actually I hadn't written. I had illustrated. Okay, I'll take over, right? Fit myself into what Ava has described and I'm glad that we have these things up because it feels more like home and a little bit like Greenwillow's office where you would be surprised to know that they do not have a table large enough to put these sheets on and Ava who does all these wonderful things has to push everything away and say "here; put them over here" as we go over them. It's very

exciting to go over the sheets and get the colors right, in which I feel I have wonderful guidance which I would have needed and still do need. So, I will come to all those aspects and pick up the lost story that was started. I did illustrate two other books before I came to Greenwillow. I didn't write them. My first book I did was with Remi Charlip, and it was called Hooray for Me; it was about 1976, and that was my first book. I had done a lot of other things before that including making books by hand, and I had been quite connected with the design of books and with type just in a very small shop when I was in art school, and then I didn't go back to doing that for a long time. So, I had done two books and I had written this book. I'm neither a writer who became an illustrator nor an illustrator who became a writer, but I think from the time that I could hold anything in my hand that made marks and could talk I did both those things. You know that image of a person whose head is almost on the paper and his head is like this and they're talking and drawing and they say "this is before you can even see it and this is a person about to eat a mouse and this is a mouse" and they draw and they talk, and anybody who hung around children knows this person. It's sort of a universal small person. In fact I just wrote a book that is like that. It's about a person drawing their stories. They make up the stories and they draw them at the same time and I can't think how I'm going to illustrate it.

So I wrote and made pictures. Not necessarily simultaneously but in some way the impulses that ended up in finished works in me took two paths. I guess you might say that. I also do write things that have no pictures such as poems and stories for older people. Of course a lot of what happens is that the picture door feeds into language in a very special way so that the language is its own illustration.

Well I had been a very busy parent and teacher and had made many gingerbread houses as a younger person, partly as a way to do art and take care of children at the same time. We made all kinds of extremely fanciful confections, breads; and I missed it once the children were grown up and I wasn't doing school anymore. Without actually thinking of a future for the manuscript I wrote a story which did not have the recipe at the time. It just was a story about a gingerbread house arriving from a grandfather. Then I indicated that it could have a recipe. I thought it could have a recipe with it. I don't think I was completely oblivious to it becoming a book because I had already done the illustrations for two other books and I was standing on line to go to the movies with a friend who introduced me to a friend behind me who happened to be Janet Schulman. I don't know if you know her name?

Weiss: Janet was our Marketing Manager at Macmillan when I was at Macmillan. And when we left Macmillan, Janet left and decided to devote herself to writing. She wrote a number of books and she did freelance work for us and eventually went back to work and is now really a big honcho. She is editor-in-chief at Random House. That's a big job and she is an enormously smart, capable woman but then she was "in between";

she writes very well.

Williams: Actually you get the picture--fate decrees somehow. It was fated that I meet Janet Schulman and that she should be standing behind me and that my friend should have gone to college with her. My friend said, "Ask Janet." Well, what I wanted to ask Janet was, was it really alright for a publisher to keep a manuscript of yours for a year, because I had sent something to another publisher, and they had it and I called up about it and they always fumbled and they never sent it back so I asked Janet and she said, "No, that is outrageous." She said, "Do you need an agent?" which had never crossed my mind, that I should have such a thing. I said, "Sure," so Janet Schulman became my agent for about a year, and that was a very important year because she said, "All right, bring me what you have." And I brought her actually the manuscript for this and some sketches I had done; a long thing I had written, the one which had fallen down behind the radiator at Dial or I assumed it had fallen down behind the radiator, and this story, and she didn't pay any attention to the ones I liked a lot. And she said, "This," (gingerbread book) and she had marketing ideas which was a concept quite absent from my makeup. Angels have looked after me. So she said, "You should do this and develop the recipe, and this is the time to do it because there is an interest in it. If you don't do it someone else will do it.

So she took it to Greenwillow and they were interested in it. I had not been there or met anybody there but I was very impressed because they wouldn't buy it until they baked it and having been a teacher and parent I was very impressed by that because there's nothing so disappointing as getting these directions for doing something that doesn't work. "Cut this out, pierce this, fold this" and then it doesn't stand up. That's very disappointing so I was impressed that they baked it. I need to tell you this as it is very interesting about the relationship between an editor and a person who is working out the creation there. They are in a partnership for a while. Sometimes I'm sure quite antagonistic, quite uneasy and sometimes quite wonderful. Even when wonderful, probably it has quite a lot of push and pull in it. But the editor at Greenwillow with whom I worked worked on the recipe. I mean everybody was content with the story. We didn't yet know how it was going to look, but we had to work on the recipe a lot. Now writing directions is really a very particular class of writing. Because there is no limit to the interpretations of an intelligent being such as the human being, and a child, of what you tell them. This isn't because they're stupid; this is actually because we are very intelligent--right. So we don't know how it's going to come out, so it's hard to write directions and in the process of working (we did most of this by mail) this editor who had the charge of this, baked it, and she baked it with her child, and she wrote comments on it as though this was a very important manuscript, and she said, "Did you say this takes 10 minutes, but it takes 8 minutes?" And we corrected those things, and so forth but suddenly it became something she might have written instead of something I wrote, because I had taken

great care not to write a standard recipe. I had avoided certain language and had tried to write it in a vernacular way, the way I would tell a child to make something, but with clarity. In the process of trying to achieve the clarity, we fell into recipe language and it went on much too long and I found myself hating it. I said, "I don't want to do this."

And it got to be a terrible burden and then one day it appeared in my mind what had gone wrong. This had not been imposed on me. I had my share in the relationship. I didn't say "No." It was new to me, but I didn't know where to say "no" politely without having a tantrum. Because I couldn't see it happening. Finally I did see that that had happened, and I sat down and wrote the whole thing over again, incorporating the important changes that would make for the clarity but keeping my style, so then I was happy with the manuscript. I (if you don't mind me saying) have never been happy with the book. This book had certain constraints being part of a series--Read Along Series--which I think has 35 characters a line or something like that, and line breaks so that a person who has trouble reading isn't left up in the air or in the middle of a sentence, and doesn't know the next line is broken. So it makes sense--that helped me and that improved what I did actually, fitting it into that, but I don't feel that I did very well with the constraints, and the separation process which I was not used to.

Weiss: Vera is a very instinctive sort of artist; she gave us the art on separate pieces for each color and even though this book looks terribly simple she had a very difficult time with it because her mind doesn't work like that. This is not criticism of her. That is the kind of person she is. I tried to make it as easy as possible. We ended up with millions of pieces of paper. I practically went into a catatonic stance for a while and then we tried to sort this out, because we had to pass information on to the printer who has to work on this: "Use this also on page 47, 59 and 13, but use only the upper half of it." It ended up with a two page covering letter from me to the printer, single-spaced, and I looked at this and I said to myself, "they're going to go crazy." I went over this with the printer's salesman. I figured I had better do this line by line so that he could again explain it to others. They told me afterwards that for a whole week the men in the stripping room that worked on this book went home with migraine headaches.

Williams: I wrote him a "thank you" letter.

Weiss: This is a simple looking little book; we all think it came out very nicely. It is part of a series and the constraint was the size. The whole series is the same size and the typeface is the same typeface. But it was an introduction into our working together.

Williams: I guess I don't like it because the gingerbread (I think it is important to say this before I talk about my other books), the gingerbread houses had been a certain kind of expression to me. They

really connected to something very important and a deep feeling I had. I can feel it just to talk about them so I know it is real. I had used them to express something very essential, and that's the only kind of books I am interested in doing. In that sense I don't think of myself as somebody who starts from a design end. I design my books, but I don't do it by thinking about line and page and balance and things like that. I do it from some inner image that comes from the impulse that made me want to make it in the first place, and that is not in this book. It somehow lacks some magical thing that I feel about the gingerbread houses, and no matter how much I tell myself, "well, it worked," and it does work, and I'm happy it is in a book because actually it is a very good gingerbread recipe and you can make wonderful things from it, it doesn't do it for me. But I don't think that that's because it's impossible to do it in this size or format. I think it is because I didn't succeed in doing it--in it--possibly because it was very new to me.

An editor's function: (since that's partly what we are here to talk about is how the person who provides some of the materials for the book and the people who see that it goes the rest of the way work together). Just a little detail about this. If not for a wonderful person at Greenwillow called Ada Shearon, this book would have had a window in the floor of the house. She called me up and she said, "Did you mean for there to be a window in the pattern for the floor of the house?" and I said, "No." And she did not in the least imply that there was anything derelict or crazy about having done such a thing. "Well," she said, "we will take it out then." So they took it out.

Weiss: By the way, that's one person that we did not mention yesterday when we talked about who there is beside the editorial department which does the creative end or whatever you want to call it. In every publishing house somebody is responsible for making sure that things are correct, that "i's" are dotted, that the spelling is correct. They check facts. You would not believe (in these seemingly little children's books) how many things we do wrong. We have for instance at Greenwillow twice had upside down rainbows. The rainbows are whatever they are and they are not the other way. In other words the purple is always either here or there. I don't know. We now have a rainbow up on the wall just so that we are sure. We did an enormously successful book with Don Crews, Truck, in which there is a six-sided stop sign; in which the X that says "Do not enter" is orange instead of red. There are millions of facts that have to be checked, and there is a copy editing department that is responsible for checking--making sure about whatever facts there are; and the lady that does that is so gracious that she will never make you feel like an idiot.

Williams: I did feel like an idiot though. I did this rainbow. The last I saw of this rainbow was at the desk in Ava's house where I had to run up and correct it for the second time because I had allowed myself to be oblivious to physical facts about rainbows, for which I am

embarrassed. I had just thought of them as a sort of rainbow-hued affair with no physical determination about their order.

Weiss: We get letters from children. They catch everything and our standard reply is: "Aren't you clever. We put that in to make sure that..." and then we fix it and I want you to know our second editions have far fewer mistakes.

Williams: Now I'll talk about this a little bit. I think it is wonderful that sort of old stories are in it as we talk. Because when you are doing a book, or certainly when I'm doing one, my whole life is sort of involved in it. Whatever else I'm doing, how I'm feeling, runs into the book and hence into my relationships with the people at Greenwillow and in that way it has been a special relationship to me. As Ava has said, there is not this person that you can label "artist" or "illustrator" or whatever. We are all different people and I have been best able to work under certain circumstances and under others I think I would have a very hard time. It is a somewhat educational relationship. I have learned a lot. Another thing I have been able to do: I have somewhere in inchoate form in myself (I won't refer to what is my head), but in some part of me including my head a very total image of what I want to do. It includes the lettering, the cover, title page, endpapers. It actually does include every single thing in the book, but it is not formed when I start. If I can quickly lay my hands on it I will show you the tiny little image that gave birth to that book, and anybody who makes these kind of things will probably recognize it. I may not have brought it. It is so faint that it takes quite a while for it to get louder. At the same time I don't want to show it to an editor or an art director who is going to make it clearer than it is at this point. I want the room and the time for it to develop up to the point where it has all its parts, and that takes a lot of listening and it takes for me to be willing to fight for certain things. This dear creature whom I liked very much would have vanished from this book (Three Days on a River in a Red Canoe) if I hadn't dug my heels in, because it was deemed--wasn't really deemed--Ava had a sense that enough had already happened in this book. Enough excitement, but I had crammed several years of canoe trips into a three day adventure. You couldn't possibly see all these things unless you picked a perfectly phenomenal outing; in three days, storms and moose and towns and fishes--the works you know. But I wanted them all in one book. I wanted the experiences piled up together because that's what the experience has become to me from these many adventures. It's many-sided and it contained all these things. I couldn't have told you that. I didn't know that, but when Ava said, "Maybe we don't need this moose," I knew you wanted it smaller. I knew, and I knew I wanted it big because I had seen it like that. I mean when you first see a moose—if you're close to it—it is the most gigantic animal. I mean it is ridiculous; moose are ridiculous and really they are so funny and that's what I wanted to put in it. So I had the sense to say that at that point, "No, it should stay in," and it stayed in. But that's a responsibility of the artist or the writer

working with an editor to know what it is they have to have in there, or it isn't going to be what they want.

Weiss: I think one thing that I'm often asked when I talk to groups is "What happens if you don't agree?" and that is one thing that has never happened; it really hasn't Thank God, it is not an adversary relationship. It is a relationship which after a while is built on really total trust and the trust is an earned trust. It's not "here is my label; trust me." It is something that is developed when you work with somebody over a number of years, over a number of books and when I do something and I say "Vera, I will do this," Vera knows it will be done. She doesn't have to worry about it because she knows it will be done, and if Vera feels very strongly I will trust her because I have learned that her instincts are impeccable and it is a relationship that is built up between editors and writers on every level, adult writers as well as children's books, which is why you will hear very well-known authors talk about their editors. Their editors are very important people because of a relationship that has developed and the need, sometimes, to bounce ideas off somebody who has earned the respect and who you know is not going to push you too much but whose judgment you value, so that working together becomes a very joyful, easy thing. It is just not an adversary relationship.

Williams: This relationship was greatly put to the test by this book (Three Days on a River in a Red Canoe) and I suppose it came out. The first thing that happened was I wanted to do this in color. The two books that preceded it were separated. I'm not a good color separator. I like to think in lots of color, all mixed up together. So there are books that are pre-separated that I think are beautiful, and black and white ones too. I just happen to do better this other way, I think. There was a lot of pushing and pulling about that. I called my friend Remi Charlip who I had done my first book with. I said, "What should I do?" and he said, "Do anything you have to; have a tantrum, cry, beg..."

Weiss: What were our reasons? The economic necessities of keeping a book at a certain price make it necessary for us to have (at the front end) the start-up cost in relation to the size of the edition. If we don't want to sell the book for, say, more than $10.00 we must, over the first x number of copies, work out whatever the start-up costs are; and camera separated books--in other words, full color books (Vera just does a watercolor)--cost us much more; therefore we have to have a bigger first edition. Now a good publisher figures he should never print more than let's say 18 months worth of books. Otherwise we have a warehouse with incredible amounts of books; you have money tied up in these books and as the interest rates went from 14% to 21% we could less afford--I mean publishing is also a business. So Vera, after this book and after that book, was basically still quite unknown. These books were doing nicely and we saw great potential in Vera but (this goes back let's say five years) there were full color books--and they were earned by people who were well known in the field.

Now this changed very rapidly. We have very quickly moved into full color by virtue of technology that has been developed that makes it more economically possible. As well as the fact that there is so much full color stuff out there that just to stay competitive we cannot afford to have modest little books because the whole thrust is toward more color. Time magazine has color, the newspapers are going into color, the magazines everywhere (it's true for children's books as well) everybody's got a color television set. Vera was really at the very front end of this and wanted to do a certain kind of book and I personally could see no way of her separating this. Not that there are not some people around who could do it. Ariane Dewey could have done it. Vera couldn't, but Vera is not Ariane. She is she and I sort of knew if she attempted it and if I didn't have a nervous breakdown then Vera would have it, or the guy at the printers. And so she certainly had an ally in me. I did everything I could to convince everyone else that we should indeed let her just draw these pictures; Vera did not have a tantrum but she stuck up for her rights.

Williams: Well I stuck up for them with tears in my eyes and sort of heard that Ava was coming over to my side and she would do what had to be done to make it possible, so I got to do them that way. In the course of this book I lost almost all the drawings, all the pictures for it when it was about two weeks from being done and it was late already for publication. I left it on the subway. I called them up (Greenwillow) and they said, "How long will it take you to do them over?"

Weiss: The first thing I said because she was really... I can't tell you. She said, "I lost the portfolio." I said, "You're kidding?" Then the next thing I said, "Are you going to commit suicide?" I was serious. I was really serious. I wanted her to know that she didn't need to.

Williams: So I didn't commit suicide. I went and lettered a "lost" sign in Spanish and English and got it duplicated and plastered the neighborhood with it. Then I made myself a sandwich sign and went and stood in the subway where I left it.

Weiss: Vera was already late when she lost her art work. It was meant for the December sales conference and it was in the Fall that she had lost it, and we would have been late even if she had delivered on time. So the question was should we postpone the book. We have postponed very few books. We pride ourselves in meeting our commitments. What you have to realize is that when a publisher accepts something and then holds it and doesn't publish it or postpones it, the artist or the writer does not get any money. It doesn't start to earn money until it is bound in the warehouse and being sold, and it is a very real responsibility that our books are published on time. If we say to Vera, "Your publication date is May," the publication date will be May and not a year later, because what does she do for money in this interim period? So the question was: should we postpone the book--which probably would

have been the intelligent thing to do. But we decided not to be intelligent.

Whatever comes in to the office gets xeroxed. There had been a dummy earlier, and we had xerox copies of it—a very rough dummy so she didn't have to start from scratch.

Williams: I did it over and I will never know until sometime--I don't know—where everything blows together in a great heap, me and my early pictures, whether the second set of pictures was as good as the first or better or different. Some are different, some are the same. The next thing, I'm just going to tell them one little thing about this because you should have some chance to ask questions and then we should wind up. Just when I finished this, and I just got this from the photo room, I took a notebook to be photostated. Let me just say that I wanted this cover and I wanted it to look this way, not because I am interested in style. That is one approach to things. There are certain things that are in style. We get eyes for certain colors; I mean we all know that, because they're in fashion. We get eyes for certain type, we get eyes for a certain image, because we become interested in a period or we become interested in a certain kind of thing. I think that has a function but I don't work that way. I wanted it to look this way because this is what it was to me in my heart—it was my travels, the finally realized, long wanted travels of a child. The pictures were made in that way. The language was in that way. I also wanted to letter this by hand but I was not invited to do that. I was prevented from doing that and this type was chosen instead as being somewhat like that. I'm not sure if I agree with that but I like the way it looks. Anyway the whole thing, as I said, my sense of design, comes from the same impulses as the stories and the pictures and I really value that kind of expression. I like things to be whole and not to be chosen for reasons so much of style or trendiness or even necessarily appealingness. For instance when I design a page I put things in the middle if they're in the middle of reality. They're in the middle if that page is to be whole and have a certain feeling of completion and so forth; then I feel a certain way about the middle, otherwise I don't. I'm sure people who design things who may not enunciate this (may not say it) have the exact same feeling. There are feelings behind design, so I did want to get that in. Then I will just tell you the end of this book because it was sort of the trials of this book, I suppose, and if Greenwillow trusts me that's how come. After losing it and doing it over--we hadn't got to the rainbow problem yet, that came later...

Weiss: On a Friday night we had done everything we could in the office to prepare for delivery of art.

Williams: I went away leaving the photostat and all with a message for my son, who said he would deliver it to Greenwillow--just the cover--they had the rest of the book. The reason I had to have someone deliver it is because I had gone to Washington with a group I work with

in the Peace Action at the Pentagon. So I couldn't deliver it and I didn't quite know when I would come back, but as it turned out it took me much longer to come back than I thought. I thought I would come back in a few days.

Weiss: This made us friends. We have no illustrators in the office, we have people who prepare the mechanicals. We do all the typography. We do all sorts of things like paste up type, position--all that kind of stuff. We choose the type, we choose all the display type, we work together all the time. We had done everything we could short of having the art and the art came in and Vera said she would be in early the next week. We were pushing for time, and we would go over it together. I like to go over everything with the artists just before I release it to the printer. The art came in on a Friday afternoon. On Monday morning we got a telephone call from a friend of Vera's and Vera was in jail. Vera had been taken in chains...

Williams: I don't like to overdramatize.

Weiss: Anyway it was really awful. Here I was looking at that portfolio of loose pieces of art but the instructions were not all that tight.

Williams: Actually the problems really had to do, I think, with this page.

Weiss: Well, there weren't really any problems because I knew the book so well by then. The problems really had to do with something we are very careful about--placement. We don't do sloppy books. We don't do books where you can't read the type because the background is too dark. I think that is inexcusable to do that. We insist that the artists have the type before they start working so they can integrate it because the type is part of the page and you can't make believe it isn't there because nothing really matters except the printed page. We don't do art work for framing. We do books. But we have to triple check and put it all together, and I like the artist to have a chance to look at the final thing and say, "Listen, I would really like this, or this way, or whatever." There was no Vera for a month. So we took the book. We couldn't wait. There was nothing we could do. I talked to Vera. "I'm going to release this stuff. We are going to do everything."

Williams: Fortunately I was in a Federal penitentiary and we had unlimited telephone calls. In a county jail you can't get near a telephone.

Weiss: Vera had a date at the New York Public Library to demonstrate this book (Gingerbread House) to a group and we had to call up and say, "We are very sorry she can't come. She's in jail." Which was wonderful.

I kept sending her things (still Three Days on a River...) to look at and send back, to tell us. We just carried the book forward. We couldn't wait. We have certain rules. We have very few rules but one of the rules is that we want color proofs of the whole book at sales conference time because we feel the salesmen cannot sell picturebooks unless they have them. You can't sell a picturebook from a jacket sketch. A picturebook is such a unique thing that if they are going to go out they've got to have it to sell. We were really pushing. Anyway we took the book as far as we could, sending Vera things, and kept getting things—back and forth. The day she came out of jail she had a week's teaching in a Head Start school (very near my house actually) and we met that Monday afternoon in a diner. I brought the blueprints to show her because the book was going on press the next day. So here we sat over a cup of coffee and went over them just to make sure that we hadn't done something wrong. It wasn't likely, but were there any pictures that were in the wrong place, because the day after we had 20,000 copies of the book. So this book has a very special story behind it. And it is a selection of the Reading Rainbow—a main selection. You know, last year they chose five books. For some reason these books don't have the sticker, because they have this elegant sticker—you know what the Reading Rainbow is? Does anybody not know what the Reading Rainbow is? I'm so glad you're here. Public television (in New York it is channel 13) is nationwide—started a program, last summer was the first summer where they took books. They took a main selection and a group of other books and they made a really wonderful program where the children review the other books and they make a story out of the main selection and this was one of them. It was very kind to the book.

Williams: It gave the book a new life so now it is going to be in paperback. But my children were outraged at me because I had not let them have a television set when they were young. I had said, "You can either have a mother or a television set" and then I caved in to this.

Weiss: And this will be a main selection this year, 1984, in the summer on Reading Rainbow. So when it comes, try to catch at least one program—they are well done. I wish we had more public money to do more programs of this sort.

Williams: We have a little time for questions where we will both be talking.

Weiss: I'll tell you the next book (A Chair for My Mother), which was a Caldecott Honor book, really proved all the faith that we had. This is a wonderful story. The story, the words themselves are so substantive. She happens to be a wonderful writer and knows exactly what she wants to say; it is a marvelous story to read.

Williams: We, it is true, have hit it off very well and it is a very good relationship. Ava is very encouraging and I work very well when I am encouraged. I did work with one other publisher and that was

a very different experience. I don't know very many writers and illustrators in the children's field myself, but I know enough to realize that ours is unique. But when we discussed it, we realized we were not going to present a generic relationship, because there is no such thing; we were going to present ours and Ava was going to give you some idea of the generality of it. But it is different for different people, and there are people who might not enjoy this intermingling of life and work in the same way. I also want to share a feeling I have about the prizes, and the Caldecott. Ava said that that showed that I was worthy of the trust. Of course I loved getting the prize. You can't help that. But it's not the definitive measure of a book's worth at all and anybody who makes them knows and has to believe that. Because the next book I made I loved as much and it didn't win the prize, and I loved this one and without Reading Rainbow it would not have had a very successful life either. There are a great many books. You who are librarians know that it's a very complicated process by which they are chosen. There are wonderful books that don't get prizes. Even if it's great to get them, they're not the measure of how great the book is.

Ken Marantz: It is no longer a secret what happens at Caldecott--who the 15 people are, the differences among them.

Weiss: In terms of romanticizing relationships, we work with people over a long distance, which isn't easy and we couldn't do it if we didn't have a relationship of a certain nature. We work with people in Alaska, in England. We publish Pat Hutchins, who lived in New York for a few years when she was young and brought us her first book, Rosie's Walk, which is almost a classic and we have been Pat Hutchins' primary publisher ever since even though she went back to London and has lived in London. Her books are licensed by us to the Bodley Head, which is the British publisher. Greenwillow is the original publisher of all Pat Hutchins' books. Now Pat Hutchins does that not because there is no one in England who will publish her (because they would jump at the chance) but because of a working relationship that has developed. It may sound romantic, but it works a lot of the time. The nicest thing about the book field is that there are terribly nice people in it. You work with people you like, and that makes up for the fact that we don't make the kind of money we would all like to.

Leonard Everett Fisher:

Something that David Godine said last night caught my fancy when he said that being a publisher is like being a "crapshooter"--quote, unquote. Am I right? Well let me say there is something to being an artist or an author in the Western world, i.e. this side of the Iron Curtain, that is very much like being in a turkey shoot.

I really don't know when my career began. I have no idea. I do

know when my book career began; but my life in the arts is considerably longer. As a matter of fact I have been reviewed, previewed, exorcised and whipped in the public press since 1945.

I am going to show you some steps in the making of one particular picturebook. They're not all the steps. I am reminded of the youngster who came home from school one day or every day for a week and all his drawings from creative art were done in black and violet. He had a violet sun and a black house or he would have a black sun and a violet house, and by Friday the poor kid's mother was exasperated and thought that this kid needed some help. She couldn't understand his choice of colors. Then the youngster informed his mother that black and violet were all the colors they had in school. What I am going to show you are some slides from Star Signs because these are the only slides I have that deal with a documentation of a book, not because I think it happens to be the best picturebook here. But I intend to bracket that book with some earlier picturebooks; just an inkling of them--where I came from and a little bit of where I am going--to give you an idea. I cannot show you the rest of the art, the typography that I am interested in, the calligraphy, the painting, the liturgical painting I have done.

Let me say I think that the worst criticism that I have received was by Life Magazine and that was in 1964. I consider myself a survivor because I am still here and Life isn't. The best, the nicest words ever said about what I had done was by the late Cardinal Cook. I had been commissioned by the Archdiocese of New York to paint the Stations of the Cross on a 180 foot circular wall in a small church in New York. That was a very unusual commission because I am a non-Catholic and I was commissioned by the diocese. But in any event we approached Cardinal Cook on the reception line at the consecration--my wife, the architect and I (at that point I thought I was Michelangelo and he was Pope Julius). These stations that I had done were very, very modern and they weren't very well liked by the Monsignor of that church and some of the parishioners. I guess, to coin a word, they were "off the wall" literally; and they had already ripped out a $23,000 stained glass window that was done by a priest from Fordham University. So I figured my number was up. I walked up to the Cardinal and somebody gave him our card and it was put on a little silver plate and he looked at the card and he said: "Oh Mr. Fisher, you're the painter" (that's when I became Michelangelo). And I said "Yes, your excellency." I had no idea what was coming next, and he said to me: (we were about the same age and he had just become Cardinal Archbishop of New York) "You painted those stations up there." I said, "Yes sir." I didn't know whether to salute or not and he said: "Well, I want to tell you something. You have been getting a lot of flak," and he used that word, "about those stations, but I want you to rest easy because I happen to like them and that's all that counts around here." So much for public receptions. He was very kind to invite us to dinner that night.

I told you that little story simply to let you know that there are

other things impacting on the books that I do for children. Whether they be things like I just mentioned or paintings or the postage stamps that I designed for the U.S. government or a Laird of an island of Scotland who received a Charter from King Charles II to mint his own postage stamps, which he still does. I was one of three American consultants to design those stamps.

I have a bunch of dummies here. They're all different. There are no two books that I do that are designed the same way. For example, this little dummy that you see here is all that was done for the Seven Days of Creation. That's it. The reason it's so small is because I refused to commit myself, especially in the pictorialization of Adam and Eve, to the publisher. There was no way that I was going to let them know what I was going to do until I had a contract. By the time I had a contract (which was on the strength of this little dummy) I was ready to commit myself to myself because this was the world's biggest subject, strange as it may seem. If you get a chance to look at this thing later on you'll see that the illustrations that were done in about a half hour in this dummy are very much like what was the final product in the book. One's first reaction sometimes is what one does.

These other dummies are all different. Some are full, some are not full. This is a full color dummy for example. You see the jacket, you see the title page and so forth but the rest of it isn't there. I have operated since 1980 on impulse and instinct really and I find that it is more fun and more satisfying and a little bit warmer.

A lot of people remember me basically for all the black and white illustrations that I did beginning around 1950's-middle 1960's that ran up right clean on through almost to the present time. I'm probably the most formidable "drawer" you might say of scratchboard. I call it soft engraving; kids in school call it scratchboard. I think that I kept doing this thing maybe for almost 25 years. There are a lot of them. If you are interested in numbers there must be 5,000 individual pieces that were done in this medium, half of which are in public collections. This one is from The Potters, a series of books I did on colonial American crafts, professions and trades that was 14 years in the making. It went out of print about 5 years ago; and thank the lord that along came David Godine and he's going to re-do some of it very soon. We are very happy about that. But I have a friend of mine (next door neighbor) who has a friend of hers (and this is not an apocryphal story; it's really very true) who has a friend who has a collection of children's books. She lives in Manhattan and became a collector upon taking a course at the New School for about 14 weeks, and suddenly bought 3,000 books. My neighbor went to visit her and she said, "I live next door to Leonard Fisher." Her Manhattan friend said to her: "Hey wait a second; I think he is a lousy illustrator" and my poor neighbor was aghast and she said, "Why? How come?" "Well I think everything's in black and white." (Mind you, this is a book in the 60's, early 60's; we're going back 20-25 years.) She said, "He ought to work in color. The best

things done in children's books are in color. Kids love color. This guy is too violent. Black and white stuff is too violent." I don't know what she saw that was so violent in Senor Jaguar. The map of Boston. There was a map of Boston. I swore up and down that I'd never do a map again as long as I lived but I guess I did do a map for a book. I was a military mapper during the Second World War. When the war was over I said no more maps; I've had it, no more. But this one came along and the reason I did it is because there was some ESP involved in this thing. I am a little bit of a mystic, and I discovered a map of Boston that was drawn in 1775 by a topographer of the Royal Engineers. It turned out that that topographic unit of the British army was the 30th Engineers. I served in the 30th Engineers in the Second World War and I thought my god, I've got to do this thing just to make peace with that ghost. So I did the map of Boston. But these are all in scratchboards. In any case my neighbor said to her, "Well give me an example of what you would consider to be an appropriate book for children?" and her friend went to the shelf and pulled out a book done in glorious color, seven colors or whatever. A very bright book. And my neighbor said, "Well, who did this one?" and they looked at the title page, and of course I had done that one too.

This particular book was done in 1962, a little bit ahead of its time. And I was already dealing in abstractions for children that far back. Maybe I was doing it for myself. I don't know. I think maybe when you stop to consider what we do, we like to please ourselves first. As time has gone on I have calculated these things a lot less than I used to do. This particular book, one of a whole series of picturebooks that I did on Latin America, was based on the mola. The mola is an applique design produced by the San Blas Indians of Panama. San Blas is an island off Panama, and at that particular time it was a government reservation. It is opened to tourism now; it was not then. There was not a single mola in collections in the United States at that time. Mimi and I imported the first ones into this country upon which we based this particular book. We did subsequent books like Ride the Cold Wind; a whole bunch of books dealing with Latin America that had a similar flavor to them.

That, however, was not the first picturebook. The first picturebook that I illustrated and wrote was Pumpers, Boilers, Hooks and Ladders: a history of fire engines. This book came about in a most peculiar way. There was an author to the book. I had been hired to do the illustration and the designing and somehow or other the author kept turning these manuscripts in and they were extremely unsatisfactory to the Dial Press. This incidentally was the first children's book produced by the Dial Press. Jean Vestal, who was then Jean Goodspeed, and I began the juvenile department at Dial Press with this book. It went on to other things and so did we all. In any case they let this person go and Jean said to me, "Why don't you write the book?" I was terrified. I was talking to David Macaulay before, because all of a sudden you become an expert on all these historical matters that you do and it is very

frightening, especially to have to answer all the letters that you get from all these kids about who did what, when and where? Then again I figured if Eisenhower, the president of the United States, had the gall to paint pictures, I could write a book. It was not exactly my first writing experience because I had written some things for the army in 1945 at the end of the war where I was one of four people assigned to write and illustrate the history of the battalion in which I served which became part of the army war record. I wrote for that, but it was not a commercially written thing. This was the first thing, so I wrote and I wrote and I wrote. I think there were 17 manuscripts, about 100,000 words, that finally would trim down to about 750 words in this book.

There are other books. The Burning Mountain, dealing with volcanoes and all sorts of things I am interested in. I don't think it is necessary to have the experience in order to depict the volcano. In this particular instance I did have some volcanic experiences, principally at Mount Etna in 1950. I was 25 miles away when it erupted from the summit. Also I was on the edge of Kilauea in Hawaii when it went. So I have been running from volcanoes all my life. I remember standing on the shores of Palermo and watching Stromboli in action and I had just met Ingrid Bergman at the American Academy in Rome so that really made a lot of sense to me. So volcanoes are in my life, but firsthand experience is not always necessary. To give you an instance--during the first World War there was a British army nurse by the name of Edith Cavell who was executed by the Germans for espionage. It was a cause celebre around the world. Everybody got into the act, including the Pope and the president of the United States--everybody. But she was executed. An American painter by the name of George Bellows created a picture (I think it was a lithograph) and he later made a painting of the execution. Because of that he was taken to task by The New York Times for having the gall to produce a painting that he did not experience, a subject that he had not experienced. George Bellows then wrote a very classic letter, an open letter to The New York Times. And I quote: "I did not know that Leonardo da Vinci had a ticket of admission to The Last Supper." Now that takes care of experience.

I grew up on the end of these rocks (pointing to slide). My family home was on the other end and it was at the confluence of Lower New York Bay and the Atlantic Ocean and it was a time for dreaming. There was no organized baseball--there was no Little League--there was nothing. All we did was fish and dream off the ends of those rocks. We dreamed big dreams; and the biggest ships in the world passed within a mile-and-a-half of those rocks, and when the Queen Mary went by (like it went by forever with that black hulk going by) it just seemed eternity. I remember leaving for Europe from that port and seeing my family on those rocks waving bedsheets, an American flag, and all that business. I was so embarrassed by the whole thing I went to the other side of the ship and looked at Staten Island. But that resulted in an autobiographical book, Storm at the Jetty, and in that book of course there is the house

and I show you a photograph of this house that was taken 34 years ago. The jetty is gone. It just is not there anymore. And we don't live in that house either, anymore.

The Seven Days of Creation came about basically through an evolutionary process. I had done some quasi-liturgical paintings and books; but I used religion, if you would call it that, or Biblical things, as a literary jumping off spot. I did this with Farrar Straus, doing Isaac Bashevis Singer's The Wicked City and a number of other similar kinds of books—never thinking that I would ever get involved in such a thing as the Creation. Some of the paintings I have done dealt with prophets and things of this sort that would feel philosophical in a way, never liturgical. Of course, I was getting involved with that mural, the Stations of the Cross. Little by little it led to this. It had to finally lead to this thing. I was telling somebody a moment ago that if you must know, it took me six days to paint this picture—this book--and I rested on the seventh. That was the end of that.

These are some of the pictures. They're acrylic paintings. There is really nothing that precedes these works in terms of sketches or anything else. I simply went to the board and painted them. Actually there are 17 paintings in the book, and basically it took 17 days to do the mechanics; a little bit longer to figure them out in my head. But I don't paint unless I can see a clear vision of what I am doing in my mind—in my head. I think visually. I really don't think verbally. I think visually. I cannot express it, I cannot communicate, I cannot get it out and so it's got to be there. I do very little sketching, preliminary sketching, for all of this stuff.

A Circle of Seasons was the same way except that this particular book began about 15 years ago. I had an idea of doing a book about the seasons and it ran around in my head all that time and I finally woke up one morning and decided I couldn't do it. I just couldn't write this thing and I talked about this to Marjorie Cuyler, who is my editor at Holiday House. She was interested in the subject matter and I said, "What do you think we should do about this thing?" and she said, "Well, let's get a poet." And that is how we came together with Myra Cohn Livingston. It was a very happy collaboration and we have gone on to do other things. That little jacket sketch over there--that is all that it is--that is coloring paper. The Sun is Four Seasons just pasted on this thing to give me a reminder of what it was I wanted to do and I just stuck it in my file and let it be; and finally came A Circle of Seasons. It was really the first picturebook I did that was done I think on instinct—whole instinct. I did not want to create any preliminary devices for this for fear that I would not get any feeling into it. I am interested at this point in my life not so much in spreading the good word and not so much in disseminating information which you do anyway, but in feeling an atmosphere and in the humanization of us. I have been at this long enough to feel that I have certain privileges and among those privileges is to create atmospheric illusions perhaps and feelings

about things. My feelings about things.

I think this really took hold when I prowled around Cezanne's studio in Aix-en-Provence in France last summer, and I really spoke with him. First time I ever spoke with him. I spoke with all the other guys but never with Cezanne and I think maybe something of that had something to do with all that begins to happen. And what is going on now in my life is that some of the illustrations from A Circle of Seasons that you see on your left have now become wall size paintings on your right. The scale on the screen is a little bit different. You are looking at a 6 x 9 inch illustration here on your left but that thing over there is at least 4 x 4 feet. So if you will just make that accommodation in your mind I think it will give you a pretty good glimpse of what I am talking about. These are very large and there have been more paintings since then that are not quite as precise as what you are looking at, and pretty soon these paintings now begin to impact back again, 360° on the books. So I am doing all this at the same time and I am really mixing it all up. For me it is very successful. I don't know about anybody else.

Star Signs. This is the only book I think in the recent past--I have been showing you really picturebooks of the 1980's--other than Pumpers, Boilers and maybe a couple of those Latin American things. The only book that Marjorie Cuyler and I worked on step by step. So the opening shot in this performance is the jacket back and front of the jacket which was really done last. It was not the first thing in the book. Sometimes you do the jackets first so the salesmen can get the drift of what you are talking about. On your left is the first outline that was submitted to the publisher when we decided to do a book on the zodiac for young people. It was basically decided to do an informational book, not a fortune telling book, and to describe some differences between astronomy and astrology, for young people. And that little outline that you see there--it was just on a little piece of scrap paper--was submitted. You can tell by looking at that outline that the entire book is laid out right then and there, from page one to 32. In one shot you can look at the whole thing and you know in your mind exactly what is going to happen on those pages. Of course what I'm laying out there didn't exactly happen that way. It changed and turned around and there are enormous changes following this. The illustration you see on the other side is the first idea we had as to how we wanted to treat the design. It was done with magic markers, a sketch that was turned out maybe in about 20 minutes. We were going to deal in words, only words, and with the figure of that particular sign of the zodiac. Here you see Taurus and the bull. Some of this remained in the final product, some of it didn't. I wanted to fool around with the typography of those words. We had several meetings in which I took notes so that I would remember for the record what it was I was supposed to do on this thing. Pretty soon this thing began to change around a little bit more. The bull was still there, treated a little bit differently maybe. It still wasn't going to be the final treatment but now we began to break

up the page in a number of different ways dealing with the myth, dealing with the constellation, dealing with a lot of things.

We were brainstorming this thing either over the telephone or in the office. It went on for weeks, determining not only what to do with that left hand page over there but the relationship of that left hand page to the illustration on the right and the typographical considerations involved in this whole thing. Then we had to think about how that related to the youngsters who are going to look at it, let alone the adults who are going to buy it, because that too is a consideration which you have been hearing since last night and a very big consideration. Finally, we hit on that picture and layout that you see on the right hand side of the screen. On your left is my working log. I produce a sheet like this on every book that I do. It's a progress report to me and to nobody else. You're the first people that really have seen this thing, except for my editor. She obviously sees this. It tells me where I am. I am working on two or three books at the same time and I am also working on paintings at the same time. I may be doing some designing, I may be answering the telephone. There is correspondence that goes on. I still get a bag of mail a month from the U.S. postal service of catchets in there that I have to autograph. It drives me bananas but you have to do this sort of thing. There are obligations. There is a call from one of your daughters: things went wrong, her roommate didn't pay the rent. All this is going on and all this is being created all at the same time. Some 16 hours a day, sometimes seven days a week except when I am here; but I am thinking here too. On the other side of this is the jacket specifications. Most illustrators receive a sheet like this from the publishing company.

Sometimes young people, illustrators, who want to create picture-books think picture-making is all that is necessary. One doesn't have to read or measure. In our business you have to be something of a mathematician and know something of the technology involved. There's a page of the manuscript and a galley, of course, an edited manuscript and a galley that comes back and this is corrected many times over. I do this over the telephone. Boy! We have the longest calls you can imagine.

This is not the first pass at the manuscript by the way. This manuscript goes over and over and over again. I work at a typewriter, and when I work at that typewriter as an author I'm working visually. Those words have to look right. Not only do they have to be clear and concise but there has to be a look about them that goes together; that's the visual nature of my writing and of me. I assume there are others that would write the same way who are visual people. Here you see, for example, a type specimen that we used in a book and a note to me from David Rogers who was the production man involved in this thing who sent that to me. There you see a sample page in which we misspelled Sagittarius which was corrected later on and an additional note reminding me that Sagittarius was misspelled. "Don't worry about it. I'll fix it up

when we get to it." You got the drift of this I think earlier when you heard about all the errors being produced in books. They go on and we try our level best to copy edit and so forth, and I go over everything myself and there are things you miss; you cannot help it but you go on to the next and try to correct it later on.

Technology is extremely interesting to us today because all the books that I am doing now are laser scanned. That is to say they are painted. They are not color separated. The picturebooks that I showed you earlier on the screen were all color separated. Some of them were extremely complicated. I don't do this anymore; but I paint these things and they are laser scanned. Now several things happen. I was brought up to believe that you always use the best materials possible. The best brushes, the best paints, the best carriers--that is, say, paper or canvas or whatever, to get the best results. This is still instilled in my mind. I have been brought up since a little boy to be the complete craftsman and I have a certain amount of pride and integrity in what I do. That's the reason why I did the Colonial American books. Not because I was interested in expressing colonial history but because I was interested in expressing the pride that they took in their craft which I felt still had viability. That was done in the 60's when things were beginning to come apart--in those terms.

Now I have since found that you cannot, in laser scanning to produce the plates for this book, lay a drawing down flat and have a camera photograph it four times and filter out the black, yellow, red, blue and so on that are in the painting and go on through the whole chemical process of making plates. You have to be able to roll the illustrations around a drum, and that drum turns. That laser light is hitting that drum as it turns, and is picking up everything in that picture. There's no camera involved by the way; there's no film or anything. It's that light that is putting it on a tape from which they will make the plate. That's a simplistic way of describing it. I think this afternoon when perhaps we get into more of the conversation we might discuss what's going to happen in terms of printing and how that will affect children's books in the future and the very, very near future I'm talking about--maybe within ten years.

Here you see an edited sheet, and then you see the clean sheet on the other side. You see the press sheet here. So I really don't have to describe this. It is 16 up and then 16 on the other side. I visit the printer. I go to the printer myself with the production men and we don't allow them to print it unless we stamp and he or I sign that thing. I consider this my property and I feel obligated to the publisher as he does to me. It is a marvelous working relationship. We are great friends because of attitudes, I think. We give the printer a hard time. He has come to respect us too. Now coming up a little bit in time, Sky Songs, which is around here. Speaking of things being printed upside down, if you'll look at the Holiday House catalog that's here on the premises you will discover that that particular illustration

was printed upside down in the catalog. I didn't make too many motions about that. But then again I would have had myself to blame if it was printed upside down on the sheet because I would have stood around that table and seen it happen. But I'm getting beyond the soft engraving that I did so many years ago and for so many years. It's coming 360° for me. Two paintings I'll show you that were done in the 1970's, both in collections. These two paintings, or not these two but similar ones were on my studio wall at the time that Deborah Brodie and Barbara Hennessy, editor and art director of Viking, came to visit me one day in the studio.

We had lunch together and we were going to discuss a book beyond Storm at the Jetty. Suddenly they saw these boxes on the wall and we went 90 degrees somewhere else. We abandoned the idea that we had had, and we decided to do a book on boxes as a result of these particular paintings. That book is around here some place too, and there you see the original sketch, the jacket sketch. This book was printed by Dai Nippon in Japan. It is very interesting to see. The proofs came back from Tokyo with the original illustrations in which the Japanese craftsmen wrote in Japanese on the margin. We couldn't figure it out. We had to get somebody in to translate it.

Finally Viking did get it back in English and this went back and forth between us and Japan, five or six weeks or so, and finally the book came. There you see the original conceptual art for this book. The little sketches I did just on a piece of 8 1/2 x 11 paper. It is doodling. I think we all become great doodlers. I think the secret to artistic success is doodling. If you don't keep your hand moving all the time you will accomplish nothing. You've got to do it all the time; on napkins, on tablecloths or wherever you are. I keep three pens in my pocket for fear one will run out. Or doodle in your head, but doodle. That's doodling, and it ended up in that box of chocolates over there in the book.

A new book coming along deals with the Olympians: those 12 gods and goddesses. You are only seeing a detail of the illustration; that's not the entire illustration here. There were problems in this book. It deals with the 12 gods and goddesses who inhabit Mount Olympus. That happens to be Aphrodite and this happens to come from the early part of the book--the title page. The problem here was, number one you had to echo the Grecian feeling about this but not get Greek. You couldn't make Aphrodite look like Lana Turner. That was out. Sex had no part in this thing, in a sense. Sensuality, maybe--maybe. So we got involved in how to characterize all of these gods and goddesses in a way that would be different than you would see in the classic illustrations that perhaps were done in certain editions of Bullfinch or other people, and yet do it in a style and in a manner that would at once recall the Greeks but not hook into them and to create a certain universality about the people involved. There's a lot of symbolism in this book including

the myrtle she is wearing around her head or the swan, the jewelry she is wearing.

I thought you'd like to see where I work. The studio from the outside; the studio inside; and there you see some of the paintings I showed you on the side wall. Up front there are two paintings that are recent that will eventually, I am sure, find their way somehow into a picturebook.

Ava Weiss: Are you aware of what happens with the laser? You make an intermediate color transparency and you scan that. What happens is that the laser does exactly the same color separations. You have an operator who is very crucial because his judgment is what makes the stuff come out well or not because he can control the amount of any one of the colors the laser picks up. The laser translates the stuff into numerical sequences and these numerical sequences are translated again into film because you do work the laser, which spews out a tape. The tape is used to make a film and we're right back to where we were with our traditional. It's both better and cheaper.

Fisher: Miss Weiss asked me why I did not use canvas. I think you have to know how an artist works before you tell him to work on canvas, because canvas you can wrap around, canvas is flexible. I have done in my entire life--55 years of picture making professionally--only 2 pictures on canvas. I work on masonite and I plaster it with gesso and you cannot wrap that around a drum. As a matter of fact, some of my pictures are in some museums. Sometimes when I'm asked to come and lecture on these things, I see a docent bringing some children through the museum and these are very special pictures. All of a sudden you see an arm reach out, and a kid will crack his knuckles on this thing, trying to get into the space of the picture because they don't realize that it's not canvas and it's not space, but it's hard as a rock. Now what I put on there is gesso; some artists put on with rabbit skin glue. I use gelatin because if you can't sell them you can eat them. Those of us who have suffered through art school will carry memories of this to our graves, about the materials used. I spent exactly 40 cents on that masonite. The canvas would cost 40 bucks. That's the big difference and I can create illusions on that masonite you cannot create on canvas, especially the kinds of spacial things I'm talking about. Working as I do on board I have to find a substitute for that masonite. Canvas is out in my life, and has always been.

Weiss: You missed the point of what I was trying to say. Work on your masonite, do exactly what you always do. The printer makes an 8 x 10 transparency. The point is that this new technology has freed us in so many ways. We don't have to say to you anymore, "Don't work on this, or do work on this." You can work on anything you like and we know how to get around it and get wonderful results. I use the word canvas because I have no idea what you work on. You want to work on masonite, you work on masonite; and we go through an intermediate color trans-

parency and do our color separation from that.

Fisher: Except that I don't go through the intermediate thing. I stand four square in having that thing scan my painting. And that result is that you literally cannot tell the difference between what I do originally and the final printing job other than the fact that I work with acrylics and this thing is printed in ink, and that I work on a textured paper and this is printed on a particular kind of paper that they use for laser scan printing. We do very consciously miss the intermediate point. I'll talk about this later. I don't want to take up the time now.

Ken Marantz: It's clear that even in the world of technology, there's not 100% agreement.

Irene Haas

Thank you, Ken. I brought three originals from The Little Moon Theater with me and I'd like to send them out for you to look at while I'm speaking, so I'll just distribute them first.

I'm sure you feel the way I do--I'm absolutely overwhelmed at what fascinating, colorful people Leonard and Vera are. I'm pretty interesting too. I would like very much just to tell you the story of how The Little Moon Theater was made and make it as brief as possible 'cause I'm really looking forward to your questions. The list of questions that Ken sent us that you might be asking (I think you may have asked them) I found fascinating and scholarly and learned and there are a lot of answers that I would like to hear. So let me get on with this.

I, for 20 years, illustrated other people's books and about 10 years ago I realized that I had some ideas and that I wanted to do my own, but I knew that it was going to be difficult because I write very slowly and with great difficulty. Words are not my friends. I am not a verbal person. I think I'm an exceedingly visual person. This ability to translate my images into words is maybe improving slightly, but it's still a terrible struggle. Making a book is a very, very long process for me. I spend at least two years on a single book. The idea, the plot, has to be good enough to sustain my devotion to it for two years of my life; lonely, lonely hours. I've got to stay enthusiastic and have a good time. I have to love it and the ideas for books like this don't come from child psychologists or marketing experts or people who think they know what children like, where they come from. I think it was best expressed by Maurice Sendak who said that my most unusual gift is that my child's cell seems to be alive and well.

And that's the secret. That's the secret, not only of making a good book but for enjoying doing it. And for doing the art and making it real and honest and believable. Sometimes I wish that my childhood had

been just a touch more lonely. I was very healthy, and I never sat in my window dreaming for hours on end; and I was gregarious and I was playing on the street. I think I started to draw when we were listening, hour after hour every night, to the radio. And I had to do something with my hands and I started drawing and discovered I was pretty good. Then I carried this gift out to the sidewalks and I drew on the sidewalks and got to be kind of famous in the neighborhood. The reknown was intriguing so I kept it up and I've been drawing ever since. Lately I've been having a lot of trouble getting in touch with my child self because I have kids and I have lost my sense of humor about children. I have had to grow up and be serious and impressive and effective, and as a result--I mean it--I have lost touch for a lot of years with that child self. Now my kids are big and they don't need me; really, they don't even want me anymore. So it's pouring back. I'm encouraged and delighted to say that it's pouring back.

The idea for the Little Moon here, I must admit, is straight from my child self. It has to do with imaginings and images and feelings. When I was a kid I rode my bicycle three miles back and forth to this harridan of a piano teacher for my lessons. On the way I would imagine things and I would imagine mostly that I was on a journey. I think that the idea of traveling to a child is exciting for a number of reasons; the promise of the unexpected, the business of being independent and self sufficient. There were little tickles of worries that maybe I would be lonely, so I would supply for myself companions that I could control; so they would have to have been animals and that's why the companions in The Little Moon Theater are a cat and a dog. Then the glamor of the theater as a child. I was totally enchanted by the theater, and actors to my mind were the aristocrats of the world. Then this business of nighttime to a child, the glamor and the excitement of what can happen and what happens at night. It's very compelling. I think that's why, one of the reasons why, In the Night Kitchen is such an exciting book to children because it symbolizes the mood of night. And then somewhere along the line I saw Fellini's movie La Strada. Have you all; has anyone? This is a wonderful movie and in the movie the thing that excited me most was this pathetic little caravan that Juliet Massina and Anthony Quinn traveled around in. It was full of props, theater props; it was full of pots and pans that jangled and made noise; it was full of pillows to sleep on at night; and the whole thing was driven by a rickety old motorcycle, a two wheel motorcycle. And that tied it all up for me and that was where the ideas for The Little Moon Theater came from.

And now it becomes time to hang a story on all these images that are very vivid. And the way to get a story going is to really get your characters solid in your mind. All of their temperamental quirks and qualities; all of them, particularly physically; their hobbies and, I do this, I make a diary of the characters, even the cat and the dog. And then, of course, the images suggest a story. If you care enough, if you are in love with an image like I very often am, you make the story

happen. So it happened, but it took forever. It took a year to write this stupid thing, which is, you know, so few words. I keep, you know, being asked--I complain a lot--and I keep being asked why I don't continue doing illustrations for people who know how to write. I can't do that anymore, I don't ever want to do that, aside from the fact that, as has been commented, it's a much more lucrative situation. I mean you put in so much work and have to split it down the middle with someone who works so easily. It's a lot of pain. And not only that, I really do have some sensational pictures I want to make. So I got to make the story and luckily I have for an editor Margaret McElderry, who, I think David mentioned last night, was one of the giants in the business. And the reason that she is, is becauses she has faith and she takes chances and she risks a great deal once she believes that an artist loves children and is working and making art for children, honestly. She worked like you can't imagine on this script with me. We finally got it to a state where I could start making pictures. I still think it's much too wordy for a good picturebook. Much, much too wordy and possibly there's too much going on, but it was a learning situation.

The first thing I do is I make very finished studies of the characters. I do sheets after sheets after sheets of these small character studies of the various characters in the book. And I use the technique that I'm going to use for the final book so that I'm used to the color and the way a shadow or a character can be transformed by the touch of a brush so it's important to start right away. But the most fun with the Little Theater was involving the caravan. This is a troop of players who go from village to village giving performances every night and this caravan they travel in, driven by a tricycle, is a home for them. A very complete, cozy home, you know, my dream come true. And it's a theater, a working theater, and I have a little floor plan here and I've got a really careful study so that the thing could possibly work because fantasy has got to be based on the truth and got to be based on reality and has to be extremely substantial to have any kind of impact. So that's what I do first. And then I found that I enjoy working on a shaped book that is as close to square as possible. I did a lot of record album covers when I was younger and I found that square shape absolutely delicious to work on. It contains type well and gives plenty of space to do a very rich composition. So that's why most of my books have been as close to square as possible.

And then I make myself tiny, little shorthand dummies in tracing paper which nobody ever sees but me; they're just--but that's where all the visualizing comes in. It would be pointless for me to show it to anybody, even you, because it's just doodling, it's scribbling. But it's where all the pictures evolve. Dividing also happens in that little dummy, dividing the book into dramatic sequences and weighing the importance of each scene and choosing the liveliest emotional psychological moments to illustrate. That's a real talent and I think it's a particular discipline that makes illustrators very special people, very special artists. Then by that time I have my galleys in the typeface

which we have chosen and I cut them up and tape them into a full size dummy so that I can determine how the spread will look, how much space I'll have for pictures and the rhythm of the book when it's read. I can, anyone can, manipulate the interest and the motion of a story by teasing you with the text. By making you wait for the next page. If you put too much stuff on a spread, you've lost interest in what's coming. So all that happens at this stage. This is the only dummy I do.

I am extremely indulged. My approach to books is painterly and as Leonard said, I won't commit myself to a finished painting, not only to my editor, to myself. I never know what the painting's going to look like when I begin. I really don't. I think very often the finished project is a heck of a lot better than what I could have visualized in the beginning and I will do a finished painting. If I don't like it, I will put it aside and start all over again. There's another reason it takes me so long. I start with the first spread and I go to the end, mostly because the child in me wants to see what happens next. And I want to really know what happens before, before I can tell what happens next. That's really a pleasure. There are a lot of pleasures in doing this stuff. And something happens; I don't know about you. After five or six months of work like this I get pretty good and fast also. My technique changes. This is serious.

I brought something I think might be interesting. I did a jacket--I saved my jackets for the last--and I did a jacket for The Little Moon Theater that I think probably would have been much more appealing and catching than the one I ended up with. But it's so different from the inside of the book; it just became so much more, I don't know, kind of dramatic and grown up and a much more serious and theatrical kind of jacket than what the interior of the book was. So I stopped working on it and made that decision because of the change and what had happened in my technique.

Okay, I finished all the paintings, I think, and I do tracing paper layouts as carefully as I can do them of the composition of each spread: where the type will go and how big the margins will be. Then the designer at the publisher does the exact paste-ups for the printer. I couldn't do that. So it's time to go to the printer, I guess, and we get back our proofs and progressives, or progressives and proofs, and that's when the agony begins because it is the time for all kinds of mistakes and errors and goofs, and you get the feeling that the whole situation is impossible.

In this situation with The Little Moon Theater the worst goof was mine. I had done a book earlier called The Maggie B where I had very successfully washed the color spreads, which I felt really did more to state a mood than anything else I could have done. And I thought what I would like to do for The Little Moon Theater was to wash the whole book in a kind of golden, parchment yellow. I wanted it to look like it was

full of afternoon sunshine or something, and give the little kids a nostalgic feeling. I mean it was nonsense. But the paintings, I felt, did it. Unfortunately, the printer discovered that the interior painting reflected onto the yellow background and what happened was that every single page was a different color, and when I had a double page spread the right hand page would be a different color from the left hand page; and it was kind of a nightmare because I felt that the whole mood of the book would dissipate if I didn't have this afternoon sun color permeated. And what he proposed doing actually worked out very well and now, two years later, I'm really quite impressed with what they did. They gave me a fifth color, a kind of yellow, and it was never the right yellow--you'll see if you can see the originals--but it was not bad. It gave the effect I wanted. But there was a man at the printer who hand dotted the edges of my paintings so that they could be lifted off my background and he feathered and silhouetted every single painting I did so that it could be printed on top of this field of color. In the beginning they were ghastly; they looked like they were cut with a manicure scissor, but I kept yelling and complaining. And he eventually, I think, did an incredible job. So, that was the prime goof of all time.

Meanwhile, Margaret (my editor) is being patient. Not only was she patient, but she sent me and the designer to the printer to watch the final printing, which, incidentally, came after three proofs which is kind of unheard of, isn't it? Because it's very expensive and I was hating all of them. We went to the printer for final printing and I went with a designer who had just started working at Atheneum. Her name is Felicia Bond, who has since become a really sensational author/illustrator; her books are delightful. And she was a very good designer too. She knew her stuff, she knew what was going to happen at the printers. She knew what to expect; she had vocabulary; she knew what to ask. But she was a softy, like me; between the two of us we didn't have, you know.... And we were sent up to this printer who was in the north of Wisconsin. I don't think he had done too many children's books. But his bid was pretty low. So at that point, we had to start thinking about that and we went up to northern Wisconsin. We had to wait till the hunting season was over before we went, and we spent two days at the printer and Felicia and I got to be pretty good friends. We got terribly involved with the individual people, with the sales rep first of all: he was our keeper. He had to watch over us and host us for the two days we were there. We got involved with the owners, we found out about their families; with the printers particularly, and their families. And we were pretty much assured that they cared a lot. They took us to lunch at the Country Club and they took us to dinner at another club. We were showed around this little community and the pressmen suddenly grew into the most important human beings in our lives. If they ever knew how important and powerful they became.... I brought them cookies. I was desperate to make them happy.

We got to the printer and found that there were mountains of this yellow printed background already finished. I hadn't had a chance to

okay it. So there wasn't much I could do about that. And then we started waiting for the press proofs, and that has got to be agony because, of course, the earlier ones were ghastly. I don't know whether you know what presses are like and the litho process. At some point you become aware that there are little fountains all the way along the front of this huge roller press that spout out color at different intensities. Oh god, I'm pathetic at describing this, but that's what it looked like to me. And we would get one picture just perfect and then two pictures up it would be all off. So in order to get the all-over picture right, I would have to sacrifice something that was so perfect. I was, you know, overjoyed and it ended up being a ghastly experience of compromise. In the waiting hours, Felicia and I got to know one another's deepest secrets, and then they had a lot of problems with registering.

We had quite a lot of anxiety by the end of the day, as you can imagine, and we went back to our motel and were taken to dinner and studiously avoided talking about the owners of the printing plant, learning more about their families and getting more involved. The next day the psychological wearing down began, and I would say I'm not really strong at any time of the day but at the crack of dawn I'm a limp rag and I was told the paper I had chosen to print on was too absorbent and they could never get the color I wanted. I was told that my work was inappropriate for reproduction. I was told that the color would improve when it dries, which it didn't. It got dustier and dustier as it dried. I was told that I had to compromise and what was most difficult to bear at this point was that we were letting all these people down. And they didn't like us any more and they were hating us, as a matter of fact. And then they started to talk about the union. We got a little bit scared so the proof started to look pretty good. I did end up finding myself signing my initials to two years of my life's work, all of Margaret's confidence, and so on. We rolled up our proofs and got on the plane and at one point in this little airport way up in little Wisconsin we opened up this big thing and looked at it in the daylight at the window. We couldn't believe what we had done!

Anyway, all that happened then, and now it's two years later and I look at the book and I think it's a very nice book. I think that it is selling pretty well. The reviews were real good, except for The New York Times who thought it was too wordy. But I think it comes through. I think the emotional quality comes through. I think it creates a mood. It entertains, which I think is important. And I'm working on another one now. I didn't think I would ever write another one again. I'm trying to concoct a story with all of these images and trying to write it with conviction so it can be fantastic. I'm using all those crazy images from way back then that are still haunting. The writing, oh god, Margaret's still working with me, it's so hard--it's so hard. But I've got to do it so I can make my paintings and really tell that story with the paintings. That's it; thank you.

Question: How does the editor influence the final book?

The editor's role can be a very touchy one or helpful one or antagonistic one. How much of her is in it, was through you, were there actual phrases or words....

There are authors that Margaret works with that she has absolutely no need for any input. But I am desperate for help. She is, you know, consummately discrete and caring and tender with me. Doesn't make me feel like the idiot I am in terms of writing. I think I'm a pretty good artist but I'm a lousy writer and I couldn't do it without her input and she gives me words and phrases, no question about it. A co-author, absolutely, but thank God she doesn't ask to split the royalty.

Question: Why does she, as an editor, appear on the title page?

That's because that's her company; she's a signature editor. So it's like her firm, so that's why it's her name on the title page. That title she wouldn't have gotten if she hadn't been preeminent as an editor.

Question: Did you ever have the experience of going the other way where the writer would look at sketches and so forth to begin to develop a story?

They do that a lot in Japan. I was amazed. Somebody brings in a portfolio of paintings. They pick the paintings from the portfolio and then they hire somebody to write a story. They are lousy stories. And that's another reason why you don't see too many Japanese books in this country, because the stories are pretty bad. But the fact is that that is not a good way to do it. The story has to be solid before you can do good pictures. It becomes an interaction but the original, the first thing you've got to have is a good solid piece of writing.

Question: Are you concerned about the book's paper? Tell about trouble you've had with paper.

I'm really firm about paper. I want the paper to be, to look as close to the paper I make my paintings on as possible. So I know I have to sacrifice a certain amount of brilliancy, but this much I didn't expect. Yes, uncoated stock—very soft appearing, very absorbent.

Question: Was it the cost, the low bid, that caused the printing problem or what?

Looking back now, I think they did a pretty good job so it was not any of that. The problem was me, I think. This business of the yellow background was ill-advised. I wasn't advised. I should have been advised. I think maybe I was indulged in that. That's where most of the expense of the problem came from.

David Godine: I'd like Ava and Stephen's reaction on this. I think

it's criminal to send an author or an artist on a press run. It's the worst thing you can do.

Haas: I'm very grateful for it.

Stephen Roxburgh: I think that very much depends on the artist. Some of the artists that I deal with know a hell of a lot more about translation of their work in printing than anybody in our house. And since some of them see it in that way, they see what's going on not as a process of exact reproduction, but a translation. And they've printed enough books so that they know where they're going to have to make the compromises and their sacrifices and they're invaluable in press. With people who are not as knowledgeable about what is going on in the printing process then it becomes a little more difficult because they want to be very close to it, but they can expect things from a press that a press can't do. Then it can become disastrous.

David Macaulay

This series of illustrations does not exactly fall into the realm of the children's picturebook or children's picturebook design, but it is about the way I design books and I haven't changed for this book. Since you are familiar with previous books, there should be no problem making the jump to this one. And I consider it something of a jump, primarily because it's such a drastic change in subject matter. It's a book called The Amazing Garden and it is a book written by two doctors from California at Stanford. And if you've ever worked with California doctors, that is in itself quite an experience. This project began about two years ago and I've been working intensely on it for the past year, since last summer when I was about ready to give up and complained to them that it was simply not illustratable. But I stayed with it and fortunately worked in an air conditioned space and was able to generate some ideas. It's a 200 page book for the general reader about the brain: how it works, what we know about it today (which is very little) and so on.

I called them last summer and I said "Will you send me a copy of the manuscript, please, so I can get started on the illustrations?" They said, "You don't need the manuscript; just start." That's how this book began. As it's turned out, they were correct. I had their notes, I had outlines of what they were planning to do, and that's all I've needed. You can see how closely this is all going to move together when it's finally published. I have done 80 or 100 diagrams to supplement their text to explain certain things; but what I have also reproduced are three picturebooks that slot into the middle of this 200 page text. The first one is called "The Amazing Garden" and all it has to do is describe the evolution of the brain and the basic anatomy of the brain because it sets it up for the rest of the book. It's the way the book starts. The second picturebook that goes into the center of the book is

called "A Young Man Recognizes His Mother" which is basically a tour of the visual system. We go through the brain and you'll see exactly what's going on inside it. And that will be going on inside your brains as you look at these pictures--keep that in mind. And then the third picturebook, which is the most difficult, is the construction of a 500 foot high brain museum that you can walk through in order to better understand the internal structures. These are the ways in which I decided it was most appropriate to solve the problems of communicating some fairly complicated stuff, in a way that would entertain people, in some cases making them laugh, but ultimately leave them with a clearer impression of what the brain actually looks like.

Each of these is treated as a little picturebook in and of its own right. This first drawing is about four inches square. They get larger as the brain gets larger. In the cover drawing for "The Amazing Garden" you can see that it's a skull: the eyes are here, the nose is here, teeth are here, and the edge of the skull is here. And the rest is, of course, the place in which this garden exists and in which this amazing structure grows.

The first drawing, this is a little larger, fills a little more of the page, is the brain stem, the oldest part of the brain. Now I have, obviously, intentionally made these series of drawings to sort of imitate, in a way, old engravings. Particularly those done by Wandelaar for Albinis' book on anatomy which is just a magnificent thing and a wonderfully inspirational thing for me in getting started. So there's the brain stem, the oldest--500 million years old--part of the brain. Since it's called the Reptilian brain because it looks like almost the entire brain of a reptile, there is a reptile in the drawing. I'm not adverse to cheap tricks if they help to remind you of this sort of thing. So as the drawings grow, the brain grows. We've got the cerebellum here, a couple of frogs, one there and one in the corner and a cod. This is a fresh water cod, an unusual variety of fish. And again, we're up to five by six inches, I think, maybe six by seven at this point.

Just to show you how it all worked out, this is the first attempt of that previous drawing. I got this far and was not pleased; just didn't feel right. And that's when I put the pencil and the rest out of the way to make sure the overall composition was going to be okay. I modified it slightly but that's basically it. The cod has a slightly heavier role. The garden is growing, the light in the situation is growing. It is no longer so muted and so dark because the brain is becoming more complete. The pituitary gland is here, the hypothalamus is here; these are the amygdalas, the hippocampus, the hypothalamus here. I had to learn all these terms just so I could talk to these guys in California and say "Where is the amygdala?" And they thought it was very funny. I was panicked much of the time working on this project, which is why, incidentally it was finished on Monday night, 9:30, May 13th--the whole thing.

This is the drawing that you've just seen, or a small reduced portion of it. These are the basic ganglia, the corpus which connects the left and right hemisphere; this is the left hemisphere and the right hemisphere is coming in for a landing up there. This all has to fit into the skull which is sort of growing in the side of this mountain and get some sense of order of what its overall container is like. And this is a marmot. For those of you who are particularly fond of marmots, there's a better view of the marmot. I discovered the marmot in one of those wonderful encyclopedias of animals. I mean the beautiful little woodcuts, I guess they are wood engravings actually.

The brain is really coming together now, it's much brighter and lighter and sunnier, and so on and so forth. There are now animals, with the exception of these two primates who are thoroughly enjoying this whole process. You can see now how this fits into the skull so you can get a sense of the pituitary gland, for instance, it is protected by that little bit of skull behind the nose. If you've ever called anybody a half-wit, this is pretty much what you have suggested. The right, and obviously more hesitant, hemisphere is still considering moving into place here with everything else. These little guys are the ends of the optic nerves. They will come out further and connect to the backs of the eyeballs, basically. And ultimately, details, just so I can show off all these little lines. This is the last drawing in this book: the finished brain which no longer needs light from outside but in fact is so magnificent it can light things up itself. So the light is now inside the brain, hopefully shining out on the rhino. The rhino is a direct tribute to Wandelaar who made those wonderful drawings for Albinis: the drawings of the skeleton walking through a landscape. Basically what happens in each plate is more and more muscles and tissues and stuff like that are put on the body. I think it's 18th century. I'm not entirely sure of that. But for some reason people at that time were interested in rhinos; or somebody had just seen one in Africa and was telling a story about them so there is a rhino in the back of two of Wandelaar's drawings for no apparent reason. They're not mentioned in the text as far as I know. So this reference of the skeleton and the rhino is directly from Wandelaar's plate. The leash I thought was a good idea so I put that in. Basically, because if one of these things gets away in a garden like this you've got a hell of a problem. On the other side you can see I have paid my respects and given thanks to both Wandelaar who's here and to Netter, Frank Netter, who's a contemporary medical illustrator whose books have been extremely useful, too, in getting the information and getting it right. That's the first book, "The Amazing Garden".

This guy will look familiar. (David by Michelangelo) His job, as you know, is to basically stand around in the Accademia day in, day out, and one day his mother walks into the museum and he recognizes her. It's that simple. All I'm going to do in this chapter is show you visually what happens when he recognizes his mother. How he comes to recognize his mother, that's the whole thing. These are pencil

drawings, they're just graphite. It's a clever graphic device representing the penetration of the eye by light. That light, needless to say, is reflecting off his mother. It's a double page spread, the gutter is right down the nose and there's a little bit of text over here. We go into the eye. That drawing's been flipped incidentally, so that the flow of the book is right. This little diagram will come in from the left hand side. Here's the eyeball. The light passes through the cornea, obviously, through the lens and is turned upside down: projected on the retina, upside down. The text on this page is right way up, the text on this page is upside down. And the next four pages are also upside down. At this stage of the game, when you read this text, you're told to turn the book around and for the next four pages literally read it backwards. You're still going in the right direction for the forward movement but you're going backwards in a sense. Primarily, you're reading the book, holding it in front of friends and people you trust upside down. That is something and they usually will trust you, until they see you reading this book upside down. That's a problem you're going to have to deal with and it's a problem that I'm going to have to deal with because I think thousands of books will probably come back to the bookstores with a complaint that they've been bound incorrectly. Well, we're just going to have to work that one through. But I thought it was important enough to remind people that the information when it transfers from the eyeball to the visual cortex at the back of the head is travelling upside down. It's not until it gets back there and is processed that we begin using memory and so on and so forth to understand how it should actually be read.

Each of these little devices then allows us to focus in on one very small area; it sets up the next page. We're going to now look at the little section of the retina which you see in this drawing. Double page spread, there's a little thing that says lift here so you don't forget that you're not supposed to read it that way but you're supposed to read it this way. The light basically travels through these fibers to the back of the retina, activates rods and cones and sends the electrical impulses back through these fibers, which you can actually follow, out through the back of the eyeball to the optic to the thalamus to the optic radiation or the visual radiation back to the visual cortex, which is back here. Just to sort of acquaint you with David's head and let you know where these things are in relation to each other, that's why that little drawing exists, and there's a little bit of text here too. Now we're going to take a look at a small section of the visual cortex itself. It's an amazing thing architecturally. All the information comes into layer four of the visual cortex which has six layers and then you send to the other layers for further interpretation and so that little diagram suggests a little bit of that cellular structure and so on. But I think most interesting is this black and white striping which is basically something called ocular dominance. What it means is that all the cells in these six layers that fall within this black band, particularly in layer four, the white layer, are controlled by or are responsive primarily to the left eye; all the white ones to the right

eye. Something happens with very young children, about one or two years old. During that time there's a battle going on, the competition between left and right eye, for cells in the visual cortex. If you put a patch over a child's eye, for let's say three weeks, for some reason you will be sure that that eye never sees as well for the rest of the child's life. Because the other eye will have just that three week opportunity to take over cells. And there's a story they tell in the book about a boy who had some little growth on his eye, something like that, and he kept picking it. So they put a patch on it so that it would heal and it did, it healed and went away. And his sight was damaged for the rest of his life. The eye was perfect but the visual cortex was simply not giving as much attention to information coming from that eye as the other eye was getting. It's as simple as that. If you take a look at the visual cortex you can see that it's not only columns of cells, but it's also these things called slabs, orientation slabs. This drawing is slightly stylized and simplified, but nevertheless, it's more or less correct. All the cells in each of the slabs and/or the layers respond primarily to a line or an edge of a given angle. So everything, all the cells and perhaps this slab will respond to a horizontal line and the next slab to five degrees, and the next slab to 10, to 15, to 20 and so on and so forth. So in order to construct the shape of David's mother's face, obviously the cells between all these slabs are to be interacted through these fibers and other fibers, millions of fibers. Now at this point, you no longer need to be embarrassed because the text will tell you that since the cell really has no top or bottom you can turn the book around to its original and correct way and take a look at the single cell which is here. We're going to follow the nerve impulse along the axon, this chain of hotdogs, some of which are about 30 inches long going from your brain, going all the way down to the top of your leg. We all have them so don't be worried about it.

We're going to take a look at a cross section now of the axon. Here is the cross section showing you the insulation, the cellular wall of the axon itself and the chemical movement inside there. The electrical impulse kind of leads through this because there are chemical imbalances that happen in a sequential fashion that move the electric impulse or the action potential, as it is called. So we're zipping along, we come crashing into a whole bunch of cells that are hanging around, waiting for information and that connection is made through synaptic connections as you can see a little more clearly here. Each of these little buttons is a synaptic connection; it's at that point that a chemical connection is made that continues the electrical impulses. We're going to take a look at that little detail of two of these synaptic connections as you can see here, and then we're going to go inside the synaptic space which is the space between the incoming part of the cell and the receptor cell which is sort of a transmitter cell and the receptor cell. These little containers are called vesicles. And as the electrical impulse moves down here and upsets the chemical balance they fuse with this surface; and as they fuse with the surface they open up, the chemicals fall out

across the space literally dropping onto the receptor cell's surface. That upsets the chemical balance here by allowing certain chemicals to escape and in a sense it opens gateways and manhole covers and so on and so forth. It allows chemicals to escape which upsets the electrical balance on this end which continues the nerve impulse then to the receptor cell and that just travels all the way from the visual cortex which is back here through the temporal lobe into the center of the brain and to the rest of the cortex so that everything, motor cortex, sensory cortex, everything is brought into it. And if you act in any way with expression the motor cortex, which is roughly in here, has got to be treated. This drawing does not appear in the book. I've redrawn it with much more emphasis on the visual cortex back here. This is the one part that should've been buried but it is there to show the lines that actually move across the temporal lobe that suggest much the direction of the information through the visual area of the brain and the various specific visual areas to this area called TE. I don't know what that means but it's just called TE. This looks to me, something like a weird projector which I'm glad to get rid of. It looks like some sort of weird slide projector that's just a little too strange. But anyway, David, you'll be pleased to know, does ultimately recognize his mother. And the caption is simply "Mama". So that is the process of recognizing somebody and that takes a split second, as you know. It takes a heck of a lot longer to draw it, to write about it, and to think about how to communicate it. But that's the second visual essay.

The last visual essay which is much less of a surprise in some ways, is the construction of this 500 foot high brain museum. We begin with the construction of a sort of stylized skull into which the brain will fit and which will support the brain. I draw scaffolding until the cows come home. No problem. And a lot of times I rely on scaffolding. If a drawing with the information in it is a little "murky" and uncertain then I just put scaffolding in front of it. Looking at the base of the skull from the back you see the cerebellum under construction. The auditorium's in the cerebellum. It will be used for introductory lectures and orientation talks and so on and so forth. The brain stem from the ground creeps up here to the two thalami, which are under construction. The eyes are here, that's the front of the skull here. Looking at it from the front, now, here's one of the eyeballs, here's the optic nerve to the optic chiasm, the visual connection is then made between the optic chiasm and the lateral geniculate nucleus of the thalamus which is here. And then these are just other forms, the hippocampus which is where memory, or some memory, is located. And the amygdala is here. Now you'll be able to go inside each of those things when the museum is finished. This hemisphere will always remain hollow but it will be enclosed, that is to say that I'm removing all the white matter leaving only the primarily gray matter structures and the necessary white matter structures to hold them together and to communicate specifically between the hemispheres. The left hemisphere will be solid and will contain different kinds of displays. Here it is. Construction zipping along, the brain is now beginning to rise up above this stylized

skull. All the heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and all that sort of stuff is placed on the outside of the brain because that's where much of the blood circulatory system is and it just made sense to imitate that and to use that as another teaching device, in a sense. So it's under construction, these are nets, just in case people fall. Opening day. Opening day at the brain museum, we've got the flags out. Now, I'm going to take you on a couple of tours inside the brain museum.

We first have to get here, which is the brain stem. We enter the side of the skull. This is full of elevators and also the vertical systems and circulator systems and all that sort of stuff. We go in there, we have our orientation lecture in the cerebellum and then we come into perhaps the right hemisphere first, the hollow hemisphere where we can actually see the structures that you just saw under construction. What we can also see here, which would not be visible unless we removed the white matter, are the connecting pathways between left and right hemisphere and between areas of cortex within a single hemisphere. So these are projection pathways from the corpus callosum which would be done through lasers and they would be programmed light shows so that at various times of day, like at 1, 3 and 5, you can see the projection pathways. At 2, 4 and 6 we'd have the association pathways, and so on and so forth. It would eventually become fairly familiar if you spent enough time there with the various connections that go on inside the brain. Greatly simplified, of course, but hopefully no less impressive. On the other side of the brain, the left hemisphere, which is solid remember, we're going to take a tour of the ventricles. The ventricles are spaces, four of them inside the brain, two large ones, one on each side that are normally filled with spinal fluid, manufactured by the choroid plexus, which is this thing here that looks like sort of a runaway vine. We've emptied the ventricle of the spinal fluid for the benefit of the visitors to the museum but normally this would be filled with liquid which flows down and protects the brain, basically, and all around the brain. This is the hippocampus, you've seen it from a couple of different points of view. You would walk up from the inferior horn of the lateral ventricle which is down here along this sort of people mover. If you're the adventurous type, you would perhaps get off and with a little blanket or rug perhaps slide down the hippocampus and walk back up again. We also have some climbing going on here. There's lots of possibilities. Anyway, you come up this space, the inferior horn, this very high space, given that we're talking about a 500 foot high brain, and you enter the main body of the lateral ventricle in the left hemisphere and here it is. This is the Caudate Cafe which you can see. It's called the Caudate Cafe because it's built into and against the caudate nucleus which is this whole surface of the ventricle. This is the top of the thalamus, there's the fornix, and this is the corpus callosum. The ceiling is actually made of what we call the callosum which is a band of fibers that would connect left and right hemisphere. Then we wander down into the third ventricle, which you can see through this path; we have runaways from the grand canyon here just to add a little academic scholarly touch to the book. We enter the third

ventricle which is here; those two drawings which you just saw will also be flipped because I drew them in the wrong hemisphere. And we'll come down on this side into the third ventricle. This is the connection between the two thalami, one here, one here, this is in the left hemisphere, this is in the right hemisphere. And we're heading up, that's the left hemisphere, that's the right hemisphere. The choroid plexus is coming along the top and weaving down towards the pineal recess. The pineal recess is here, the pineal gland once thought to be the seat of the soul is now just general restrooms for this part of the brain. When you've had a chance to go up to the pineal recess you then come down again to the entrance of the fourth ventricle and the cerebral aperduct which is the way out of this tour which we'll be ready to do. These are all actual size drawings. The book is 7 1/2" by 10". One of the other tours, the visual tour, begins in the eyeball, against the surface of the retina; you walk up along the inside of the retina. This is where the maximum amount of light and therefore concentration of cells would be; it's the area called the fobia. Anyway, we pass that and we enter, or I should say exit the optic nerve through the wall of these blood vessels which actually contain heating, ventilating and air conditioning. We come out through the back of the skull behind the optic wall and enter the optic chiasm which is here. Here's the pituitary stalk which connects under this floor to the pituitary gland. Here's the internal caratoid artery which is a circulation system for people, not blood. Leaning against this stalk, looking forward now you get this view. These are the two optic nerves, there's the internal caratoid, there's an aneurism on it which is one of the things on the tour. Looking toward the underneath of the frontal lobes, the opthalmic nerves are here, opthalmic caps I should say. Okay, from the top we get a sense of the brain, a slightly different view. Again, you can see the HVAC systems on the outside of it. A close-up shows you that we have done a couple of things. First of all, I thought since it's going to be such an incredibly expensive undertaking we need to cut costs wherever possible. So in the Fissure of Roland I am selling a dozen condominiums. I think it would be a great address, let's say 7 Fissure of Roland, Central Park, New York. It's a natural. And to add the sort of glamor and romance of living in one of these condominiums in this rather unusual environment, I've created waterfalls which will sort of come out of various grooves, flow over various ridges and then be absorbed back into other grooves and recycled so there's a pleasant sound as you stand on your balcony. These people are looking out at this spectacular view of Manhattan or wherever. The only problem with this is that it's very difficult to hang pictures. Now there is one more, very dramatic final drawing to this thing which shows the brain museum at night. Very dramatic and so on and so forth, but I'm afraid it's in a projector in Pittsburgh, which is where I last showed these, which is why you won't see it, which is why this in fact is the last slide I'm going to show you. Thank you.

Question:

I was trained.... I've never studied illustration.

Question: What are your feelings on the left brain-right brain....

I think people who have both really are better off. I mean I think; I don't know, I think that a lot of that stuff is useful. I think it's certainly based on some concrete evidence. I think that the thing we tend to do always is that it's so complicated it's oversimplified. And that connection is going on all the time regardless of what you think you're drawing with or from or where. So I would say work with the left and right if you can.

Question: Who is the book for? Do you see that as a resource for elementary kids?

I see the visual part of it as being a resource for anybody. The text is difficult in some spots so there are parts I think that just gloss over for a young reader. That's why I made the pictures the way they are. I want you to feel, however old you are or young you are that you can see it, you can visualize it and you can experience it.

Question: Audience for the book? Helping show picturebooks are for adults too?

Well, see I've never made a picture for anybody but myself. This is no exception. The first book I did was done for 26-year-olds average and the last one was done for 37-year-olds.

Question: Did you work from medical illustrations or actual brains?

I did everything, I cut up a brain. I worked with computer generated animations of the brain. I worked with illustrations. I've got a pile of books on everything from the chemical stuff of the brain to the more general parts like, I don't know; every brain book that there is I've got it. And the thing I tried to avoid desperately from the very beginning was making just another brain book.

Question: Who wrote the book? How were you chosen? Who was the genius who said to make this not just another....

The two authors of this book. Bob Orenstein was the director of Human Nature magazine which existed for about four years and finally disappeared about five or six years ago. I did an article for that magazine six years ago written by a guy named Joseph Bogen who was a surgeon who had done a lot of work with split brains, separating the corpus callosum and all that sort of stuff and studying the results. Bogen had in the back of his mind this idea that the only way his colleagues would begin to understand the brain would be to build one. They came to me and said, if you can handle manholes and pipes, you can obviously do the brain, or even the human anatomy. That was their

thinking and they said let's see if this guy can do these drawings. So I was brought in to kind of visualize it and to interpret and picture it. Which is what I did then in a half a dozen, not so terrific, exciting--at least for me at that time--drawings. What I've done here was expand on that. We got together about 2 years ago and talked about making the whole book out of this thing and then they had all this information from their research. They said let's go ahead and decide how to communicate the information.

Question: Was Houghton your publisher from the beginning?

No, it went to an auction; which my stuff never does, but because there are two other authors I said I'd go with whatever you guys want to do. They have an agent; I don't have an agent. So we went through the whole routine and Houghton Mifflin decided they wanted the book. It was only two pieces of typewritten paper; that's what they wanted. And they did well at the auction and they got the book and I couldn't be more glad about that. That's good luck.

Question: How are these sections in the 200 page book?

There are four chapters of text about various things including the evolution of the brain through the visual system and then there's a second one and there are four more chapters of text all diagramatically done in a traditional and conventional way. That's the approach and that's the thing that I've worked with, really. How to handle this and how to somehow enliven this whole book so that it wasn't just so many diagrams, no matter how beautifully they were drawn (and I admire people who can draw wonderful diagrams now more than ever because of the description). It's such a unique art form and people who do it clearly and will are to be commended for that and also for sticking with it. That happens in it, but I wanted to bring more to it than that. That's why it is broken down in this way. They (the three pictorial narratives) don't come out of the book; it's definitely a part of the book.

Question: Any difference in the binding?

Same all the way through, and in that sense there will be no differentiation except you'll just notice that there's a chunk of darker pages, one, two and three.

Question: How have the authors responded?

They're delighted. They really are thrilled, which is nice.

Question: In what way was this a radically new challenge for you? Was it difficult to conceptualize? Do you think this is a landmark in medical illustration?

Not really, not in terms of the specific pieces of art. The most

difficult thing was developing some sort of concept and ultimately reducing information into three independent chunks. That was the most exciting sense, when that finally became clear that that's what I had to do to stay sane and cover what I was interested in. That was the unique part of it. The rest of it is just taking advantage of what I've been practicing for ten years, which is trying to make drawings that are clear and as exciting as possible at the same time. Which means choosing your points of view carefully, believing that as an illustrator you can be anywhere where it is necessary to be to show most effectively whatever it is you're trying to communicate, which is why I warn students at the school of design not to become too dependent on photographs because you are stuck with a camera and drawing the Empire State Building in Unbuilding is a perfect example. I needed to be six feet from the edge of the building, looking down, showing the scaffolding coming up. No photographer in his right mind would do that. I mean you can get the shot but it's your last shot.

Question: Are you saying that the imagination is very important?

If you understand how to use that, you can be anywhere. The reason I had to cut up the brain, not because I have this morbid curiosity—although I was extremely curious and it was very morbid--but because the structures inside the brain, that whole thing from the amygdala to the fornix and the tail of the caudate nucleus wrapping around to the hippocampus, is such a complicated three dimensional form that I had to really believe I understood. Even if I didn't, I had to believe I understood it before I started to draw, and it's the same as the building.

Question: Had you considered some 3-D treatment?

We thought about it. We kicked around the notion of the brain as a pop-up book and then Miller's book (Human Body) came out and I probably won't consider it anymore. I will always try to devise a solution which best explains what I'm trying to say. If that turns out to be a pop-up, or three dimensional book of some kind, or if it has to be in full color as opposed to black and white, then that's the way I'll go. Hopefully, any of those decisions will stem more from me than from trends or just diversionary influences.

Question: How does this work compare with your earlier books?

This is different. This is number 11, on paper that will last more than 20 years since the first. The others are done on drawing paper, the cheap, thin stuff and this is all--whatever it's called, bond or something. I used permanent ink here, good permanent ink. The earlier books are fountain pen. At the time I really said to myself these drawings are being made to be reproduced and not to be hung or sold and therefore they're useless, in a sense. The book is the work of art, hopefully; the drawings are blueprints, the drawings are the building

blocks and they are for that reason in a drawer, put away. So that they can quietly disappear.

Question: Why did you decide to change?

I had a feeling about the subject matter. I'd never drawn anything quite like this before. I really just felt that these drawings might be worth holding on to for five, ten years and so therefore I went to good paper, good material, and just took a little bit more care about it and I probably will do the same thing from now on in all of them.

Question: Can you compare these originals to the printed illustrations?

I see the drawings as one thing and I see the reproduction as something else. I always have and I've never gotten in the way. The only press run that I ever went on was with Help, Let Me Out and it was just for an education; I was just there to see what came out. But working in black and white is a hell of a lot simpler, obviously, than trying to do the other stuff--working in full color. I'm nervous about the way the graphite will reproduce, especially in some of the darker, heavier drawings where it shines back but I'm going to let the printer worry about that: the technical problems as David (Godine) mentioned last night.

Discussion

Question from the Floor: This is probably a rather simple question for Vera. Since I have shared A Chair for My Mother as well as Something Special for Me with classes that I have taught, I have a question about the picture of the chair in A Chair for My Mother that has a heart shape. Did you design it that way, or did it just come out that way?

Williams: I didn't design it that way and I never noticed it until sometime around Valentine's Day when somebody at Greenwillow said "Did you know?" Careless. No I didn't.

Floor: The classes love it.

Williams: Did they discover it?

Floor: Well it's sort of like "Look at this; what do you see?" Some of us discovered it but we sort of hold it up and say look at it for a while and pretty soon someone will say "A heart".

Question from the Floor: This is for you too. Do you plan to do other stories about the family?

Williams: Well, I usually don't plan to do things in that way. I

begin to recognize that I might very well do such and such. And I've had other imaginings. I have imagined a baby being born in the chair; I don't know quite how to do that. I've gotten interested in the characters in the new book that is at the printer's now, my third book in the series. I did say to myself if I ever did do another book with this chair in it I will reupholster it on the first page. I went and made that poster (for Horn Book) and put 11 chairs on it, so, I see that I don't exactly know. I think I've gotten to like the people and be interested in it and all, but I have in some ways used up the format. In fact the third book is all watercolors like that, but I did a different thing with the borders. I was really interested in what you said about how your ability developed through the whole project so that on your next book you're working in a different way. I may just finish that.

Question from the Floor: Is the fire in the house from your personal experience?

Williams: It's not an event in exactly that biographical way. I believe that it is related to the burning down of things in life more than it is related to a real fire.

Question from the Floor: Do you feel that just working in the children's book area is limiting or expanding? I heard you say something about how you have really grown.

Fisher: Well I found the fountain of youth. I think that's what it amounts to.

Question from the Floor: Could you each give two or three suggestions to those who are interested in getting into the field that would help us?

Haas: I don't know whether things have changed in the last 30 years, but I began with doing black and white art work and stayed that way for 20 years of other people's work. I think I had an agent at that time who brought my work to Margaret McElderry and I don't know how typical that is. The only advice I have, which we were discussing at lunch, would be that if you have a book in mind, decide whether the writing is more substantial than the pictures or vice versa, and only send one at a time. Either send a manuscript without pictures, or take a portfolio around to editors. But don't burden the editor with having to decide; you can't, I mean they won't decide. If they liked the manuscript and the pictures, they won't take either, and that's very important. I think that if a good manuscript is burdened with poor pictures, then it would be a rare editor or reader who is going to write back and say "We like the manuscript but we don't like the pictures." They'll just reject the whole thing.

Roxburgh: That makes me a rare editor.

Haas: Of course you're a rare editor.

Roxburgh: I have no compunction about writing and saying, "I'm much more interested in the text than the illustrations." If you folks are going to submit something, either that you've done both, or that two people have gotten together on, the problem of dealing with my response is your problem. And so if I think the text is better I'll say "I'd like to see more writing, thank you very much." It's tough when you're writing the illustrator and you do that. He's telling his friend I'd like to see more of his or her work; and it's the other way around. I think the point here is: if the only way to be true to what you want to do is by having the two together, by all means put the two together, and then try to find somebody who will take the two together. I'm not saying sacrifice your own vision so that some publisher will take it. But if your best friend down the road did some nice drawings and they went out with your text, you'll probably have to make a decision. And that decision might be "What I really feel strongly about is my text, and it was nice to try with my best friend's drawings, but he can still be my best friend," and not have the book go that way. The editors that I know will make that distinction.

Fisher: I think that Stephen has answered it. My advice to people coming as an artist and an author is that if you write, never submit a dummy with pictures. If you are an artist and you have the text, certainly you might try a dummy but you better have a strong concept, because somewhere along the line the concept will be evaluated, let alone the drawing and the writing. I think artists have the advantage if they write. There's no question about that. Is that right, Stephen?

Roxburgh: Absolutely. It's very hard to encourage a writer to take up drawing, and say come back in 10 years when you know how to draw the human figure. And then don't draw the human figure, do something else that's your own. Whereas many, many illustrators that I know get deeply involved in the verbal process. You know, they may start with the images, but then at some point they turn that into words. And the trick is to get them to come to the understanding that "Okay, enough of this illustrating somebody else's work; I've got a great idea--I see it in images but I can turn it into words." And as far as I'm concerned, I think I would risk saying this, that the very best children's picture-books, the most integrated, the most unified, are done by one person. It's very rare that you get the two going together. When you do you should marry that person.

Williams: No, you should <u>not</u> marry that person!

Roxburgh: Maybe adopt.

Question from the Floor: If you are one of these people who can integrate pictures with words, what do you send in? Do you send in the words or the pictures or both?

Roxburgh: I'll tell you what I want to see, and then we shouldn't talk about the submission process anymore. If somebody wants to do a picturebook, what I would like to see is the text, a rough dummy--and I mean a rough dummy--and I'd just like to see one sample of finished art in that medium. It doesn't have to be a sample that's going into that book, but if you're working in oils, give me a clue that you in fact can paint in oils. One of the things that I most regretted was that I lost the book that I very much wanted because somebody showed me a pencil dummy that was very exciting. The text was very exciting but I didn't have a clue whether the person could actually execute a drawing or painting. I said "Bring me back the rest of your portfolio." Well, it took a week or two for it to come back and by that time one of my colleagues who had seen it had already bought it. So what I want to see, one thing I'd recommend (see if you agree with me) is don't, for God's sake, do the whole book; don't do all the art for the book and send that in, because you've got some indication of the complications involved in the publishing procedure, and you could spend an awful lot of time doing a complete book and discover that some simple little thing litigates against it being published. So, submit it in rough form with enough form to give an editor or art director a clue as to what you can do.

Question from the Floor: From what you said, that person is seeing two different editors at the same time then.

Roxburgh: No, someone who came in with a portfolio.

Floor: You said that somebody had bought it.

Roxburgh: No, he'd already left the portfolio someplace else. He kept the dummy but left the portfolio overnight for somebody to look at it. And so what he brought to me was a pencil dummy. I said "Terrific, come back next week with the portfolio." The only reason he didn't have it was because he had to leave it overnight. You can't always drop everything and look at the portfolio. And by the time he got back to me, the person who had the portfolio bought the book.

Floor: Would you suggest then to send to just one publisher at a time?

Roxburgh: Ideally, I would say that. Me first.

Question from the Floor: Would each of you, in turn, discuss a basic background an artist should have in book design? You said you studied architecture; you maybe fine arts, with a general liberal arts education. Also, would you discuss that? Would advertising design be appropriate; would illustration?

Macaulay: Design is design; design is problem solving. And if you had an education where they've asked you to resolve problems and you

have also some visual sensitivity, then you probably can design.

Floor: Some universities are turning out people in book design who can't draw. Would you recommend....

Weiss: The term "book design" in the book field implies working with type, so to do book design you have to have the techniques of typographical design. You're not an illustrator if you're a book designer.

Macaulay: That's for sure.

Floor: I disagree; I think every illustrator is a designer.

Weiss: Yes, but the word "book design" in the trade implies casting off, translating into type, doing all these things. You could be a book designer for a novel that doesn't have a single illustration. These are all graphic areas and I think you may mean something other than book design when you say what background do you need for book design.

Floor: Well I think the artist who does the illustration must be involved in the book, in the design.

Weiss: If you see a job advertised as a book designer, that would be the person that decides how the running heads, the typographic positions....

Williams: I have a strong feeling about an aspect about that that I'd like to share. First, there's an area in which it doesn't matter what your training is to do anything. You know, your training is your life and you end up being able to do something and learn it, some of it so you can go on into something else that you want to do. But, aside from that, I feel that when you're doing children's books, particularly children's books, you have taken on a great responsibility. You are a kind of teacher. I think that a person who does children's books would profit greatly from various kinds of awareness about life, and the lives of children, and an ability to question the cliches we've grown up with. One early book I did ended up very different from what I started with. It started with the attempt to teach people about their relatives. Page one had simple things like "I am a son; I am a daughter." I said "Okay, are these people going to be wearing clothes?" "Yes." "How are we going to know which is which?" "Well, they're going to be dressed certain ways." I mean right off we were in this mess, you know, I mean that just showed very clearly that you had to be able to think about certain kinds of things. Whatever the images are going to be, even though they spring from your own experiences, spring from your heart, you will ultimately have to make certain decisions about them on what coloring are they going to be, all those things. These people have a garden, right, I mean I remember just thinking do they have a garden like Louis XIV would have even though they just happen to live on some street somewhere? And I'm making this more sociological than I mean to,

more precisely so, or more ideological, I don't mean to do that. You need more awareness of the kinds of things that surround a person; this is true even of fantasy, I think. How do you teach that? You try and encourage people in so far as you're connected with children, libraries and so forth to have the widest kind of acquaintanceship with their culture and their history and to be open minded, and to look at things. I guess that's how you do it if you're a teacher or parent.

Fisher: I'd like to answer that too, and share a bit of some of what Vera is saying. First of all I believe in the fundamental joy of liberal arts education. Not necessarily a liberal arts education that is tied in with professional art education. I think that I have second thoughts about that. I do believe in professional art education that is hooked in, to some extent, to the humanities. Also, in connection with that I have some trouble with the American university system at large which doesn't educate but trains. They are all job oriented. And I have a feeling that in the long run it is a short term kind of thing. It's the kind of megabucks you're going to make when you get out of this institution or that institution, and there's a competitiveness in there that has nothing to do with art or humanity. And it just seems to me that education, as such, vis-a-vis art, or liberal arts or whatever you want, ought to be directed toward the humanization of the rest of us. So that we won't be at each other's throats and we won't have all these problems that exist in the world. The jobs will take care of themselves. Beyond liberal arts education, I believe a youngster, or an adult, ought to go to professional school if they're going to be trained. But then I have misgivings about that too, because I can relate an anecdote about that. John Constable, English landscapist, was asked by a parent whether his child should go to the Royal Academy to study painting. Constable was self taught, and Constable said "By all means, because you're going to get there faster than I got there." By the same token, Ingres, the Frenchman, a great draftsman who was president of the French Academy was asked the same question. And he said, "For god's sakes, if you have to go to the Academy, look neither to the right nor the left and stuff your ears with cotton." I don't know what the answer is, nor does anybody else except in what our concept is of education as such. I think many of us operate on instinct and could be self taught. But if we are uneducated I think the rest of us remain uneducated. I agree with Vera that our books all have to express a learning experience of some kind, because children obviously are not as experienced as we are. Yet I for one, who have been at every level of book publishing in terms of fiction, non-fiction, young adult, picture-book, pre-school text, you name it, my feeling about all this is that you've got to let them swim a little bit by themselves, and I think you have to present visual experiences as well as information, which my friend over here, David, does very well. It is the nature of something that we ought to tell them, not how mama and papa behave in certain situations. And this we ought to do with grace and with style and with imagination.

Haas: I say Amen to that, except that I think that it's also very important to entertain. I don't know why, I just feel that for me it is.

Ken Marantz: Here and there I've heard differences of opinion relative to some of the printing processes, about limits of this and that. I'm not going to get back to the separation problem because that was explored and illuminated. Again, this goes back to the fact that we run a print shop too. We do not use photolithography; we use letter press. I've heard at least two differences of opinion about limitation. As the creators of the images, as the producers and collectors of the images, from your own points of view, where do you see in today's technology, either the roles of those two and/or other processes, their limitations and perhaps preferences? And to what extent could we, the outlanders, be sensitive to the differences those might make without being on the inside of the processes? Is that too complex a set of questions?

Macaulay: Generally, I would say anything that eliminates that mysterious gap between the initial concept and the beginning of the idea and the ultimate physical book is good. Because, generally speaking, more and more stuff creeps between an initial idea and what its print will actually come to be, the physical product. And so people stop asking questions on how it got from here to there. I mean this kind of meeting is unusual in that these people really care about how it gets from here to there. But most people are not encouraged to even think about that any more. Nor are we encouraged to think about how this light actually works. I mean, you just turn the switch and the light goes on. And the elevator comes down from the ninth floor when you press the button. That's all you know. So anything that eliminates that, and I think that sort of getting back to a press, to a craft, using your hands, getting dirty and understanding, finally, what the whole process is, just adds so much more to the appreciation of the finished product, gives us a better understanding with which to develop an initial concept and I'd like to see that sort of thing expanded way beyond just books, but brought back into all those other aspects of contemporary life that seem to ignore the fact that people can have some understanding of the processes on which so much of their lives seem to depend. But that understanding is not demanded of them any more. So I think the process of having the press and setting type and knowing that these words don't just fall out into the air is important. I don't think it will make a difference in terms of producing 20,000 books. I see them both as quite separate and distinct things. Both with a value. One's got a great value for reaching thousands of people. The other has a great value for reaching something inside yourself which will make you make better things for 20,000 people, ultimately. That answer's about as clear as your question.

Weiss: Can I answer the question from another angle? I think if we look back into history just a little bit and we look at the reproduction

process and the ability to give to vast amounts of people pieces of printed matter, not one hand-illuminated manuscript, but reading for the masses: illustrated with black and white wood cuts--and then black and white wood engravings--and then with etchings which were hand colored--and then off lithographic stones. The introduction of more and more color is a historical reality and we're still seeing this. The fact is that the process is continually both improved and cheaper so that we are able to give more and more color to everything. These are trends that we're all in the middle of and the fact is that we now have machines doing things that people used to do. For instance, Audubon's paintings went to a master etcher who etched them, so you had other people getting in between (talking about what editors or art directors do now); they actually had other artists do art work in order to get it produced. You are losing those layers very quickly, you're getting better and better machines that come closer and closer to the artist's visual image. All of those things are wonderful. And we can also do more, and more easily, even in my lifetime, which isn't that short. Twenty years ago there were a lot of things that I couldn't do which I can do today. I also started out printing on one color presses, and you had to print the yellow first, hoping that you were putting the right amount of yellow down for it to look okay at the other end. It was very difficult, one color at a time. And now it all comes out together. It's getting much better, I think.

Bob Tauber: First, we're a little snobbish in America and Western Europe in that not all the world prints by offset. Petrochemicals are too expensive and you can't afford the air conditioning and a lot of the letter press equipment. I know a fellow here in town who sends a lot of it to Mexico. Second, it's not done by letter press because of the skilled labor expense. People need jobs, more labor intensive kinds of duties, and the process of creating a finished book are more valuable to the capital intensive equipment such as giant webb offset presses. I have a complaint with this offset industry, in the Western world, in that there's a tendency, in my experience of book making, for all of these offset long run books on coated paper to have a certain tactile similarity. And either for the economics or for the nature of the manufacturing process which includes the kind of labor in skilled jobs that are hierarchically fashioned in their order--who starts doing what when, and when does it go to the next person, and so forth--all of this streamlining gets out a lot of books at lower costs to a lot of people, certainly. Nevertheless, the trade-off is to lose some of the richness of variety that existed in bookmaking when a lot of this technology did not exist. I like the kiss of type in paper, the sculptural quality. Dave referred to these as calligraphy. These are things you like which you can build back, I think, into some bookmaking, but I'm not sure it's necessary for the mass market. It's harder and harder; street markets are taking up that gap, and I ask that in reference to the fact that most recently a picturebook sold for over 11 million dollars. I think that's the most expensive, the most money ever paid for a work of art. And it was an illuminated manuscript; I believe it was returned to

Germany. If books are going for 11 million dollars, maybe some of the things that we're starting to do now are going to disappear. Maybe something else is around the corner, like computers and televisions that are going to make books so expensive or so valuable that the only ones that are going to survive are the ones that sit there and set the type by hand. You know, when automobiles came out, a lot of horses became glue, except for the ones that were fast or strong.

Fisher: I wonder if I could comment on this too, because I think I would like to open a can of technological worms with regard to this. On one hand, I think we need people like you in the University press, in the specialized press, in the art of printing. I for one am a traditionalist and I get my one on one kicks with painting, obviously, the hand-made thing. I also like to think of art in historical terms, certainly in my connection with students, I do get involved with traditional techniques that are medieval. "Egg tempera" for one, the use of the yolk of an egg, and all of this kind of business which has a longer history than oil paint. But I think there is obviously a struggle between the commercial press and the university press and between those of us who like to think we're non commercial and have to battle commerce to maintain our creativity. The can of worms that I want to open up with regard to technology deals with computer graphics, deals with holography and three dimensional pictorializations on two dimensional surfaces. I think this is going to happen very fast, it's already happening, the state of the art is already here. I am not proposing that I'm an expert on this. I want to go on doing my paintings till the day I die. I don't think I'm going to get involved with holography, this is for younger people. But I do think that holography and three dimensional television is just around the corner; we're talking about two or three years down the line. It's coming very rapidly and it is going to change the way we look at things, the way we do things. Computer graphics certainly will be in such a sophisticated position that it will probably change our whole style of visualization. So all of this is already beginning to impact on us and so it becomes increasingly more important for people like yourself to maintain your position in the historical end of this and to make sure that craft remains in place so that it is not lost. But this other thing is coming very fast and I would like somebody else to comment on that.

Floor: I do computer graphics animation and we can decide to make the color that we want. If somebody comes to us and says "We want it to be soft and round and bright orange," we can do that, but they're more likely to come and say "We'd like it hard and sharp, and silver and shiny with a dark blue background." Grids, you know, grids are really in. And so, it's not the technique, the technology that's creating the way these things look. It's what the people who come in to us want that we're creating. I think that computer graphics definitely has a look now, it's very hard, it tends to be blue, tends to be cold. If someone says make the edges softer, that's it, we got it. Now what do you want to do with it? We can go in whatever direction.

Fisher: I have seen some three dimensional slides produced by General Electric Corporation out of Syracuse where they had a computer graphic laboratory, in which the slides (of course the machine produces the slides) of figures, of forms that would blow your mind in terms of what you could render on a piece of paper or with paint. Done with buttons.

Floor: We've done the whole digestive system.

Fisher: I wasn't talking about the whole digestive system. I'm just talking about surface anatomy. I'm talking about, do you understand we're talking about form, first. The description of form, not shape, something that goes around, all the way around. It is tactile, it is sculpturesque.

Floor: Three dimensional is what you're talking about.

Floor: She does this; she knows what you're about.

Roxburgh: Before we get too involved, the technology is certainly there, but one of the things I think you've seen and heard is that, you're a painter, you're a painter, you're a painter. There are these people doing what they do and folks like David and myself who are doing what we do to take what they do to put it out in the form that we like and that you like. I don't begrudge anyone doing anything with any other form. If you could figure out a way that we could do 25,000 books on that kind of paper and feel the letter press and sell it to $10.95, just give me a bid on any job we have. I'd be enchanted, but the point is that what we're dealing with here are trends, but they are trends made up of individuals and people who are doing what they do. It's just a whole bunch of us putting it all together and trying to get it out there to the public. I myself discovered that the type was something that had weight; Lord, you can hold it in your hands. The fact is, as David Godine's said, as publishers we're getting things to the public, and the offset has enabled us to do extraordinary things. As David was saying about eliminating the mystique, well, what that means is that somebody who knows nothing at all about production can work in a drawing room, do a drawing, a painting, give it to Ava and she can do her magic, and what they started with comes out a book. Looks very close, not exactly, but very close. There's a mystery behind closed doors, a black box. Some of us are more concerned about what goes on in the black box than most. But the point is trying to take that individual vision and put it out there, and you just start with the individual vision.

Bob Tauber: I agree with what you are saying. My very small publishers tend to be a little snobbish about what they do, and sometimes unfairly, because they can't reach the audience. That is an essential quality, getting visual and intellectual and conceptual information out to people to take in, utilize, criticize, whatever. And in fact, that's what Gutenberg started that offset has certainly carried

out far better. The problem I see is that you have a painting student who has never been to a museum, never seen a Kline, or Hals, and doesn't have the sense of the tactility of paint, when they go to paint a painting. (And I'm using this as an analogy or metaphor.) They want a nice, flat, slick looking painting and it comes out all looking sort of like pop art surfaces, looks like magazine surfaces, because they have no sense of material, it's sort of lost. But at the same time, I've sensed that just as my Vandercook proof press is not being developed any further, no one's making any technological improvements--in fact we're trying to buy extra presses too, for parts--at the same sense, the journal half life, the technological improvement taking place in offset printing is getting shorter and shorter. And that is going to be replaced by an entirely different kind of communications technology. I think there has been a threat to the book world for some years. I heard a statistic--correct me if I'm wrong—that more and more publishers are publishing more and more books and being read by fewer people. Is that true?

Roxburgh: Afraid so. But they're a loyal crew.

Williams: But you have to add that to the time when nobody read books. I mean books occupy only a small part of history. There are still plenty of places where nobody reads books. Books did away with the storyteller. I mean books in themselves were an absolutely appalling technological invention. They deprived people of all kinds of social interaction and they became the depositories of memory where previously grandmas and grandpas and people were the memory of the community. It just gets that way because your life span is only so and so but many of these things that we regard as immutable occupy only a small part of history and what they are, to some extent, are just a step in technology. It's never how it is at any point when you're in it. It's always developing, right?

Weiss: There is what we like to call the battle for the available leisure time. When you think fewer and fewer books are read. Everybody has only so many hours in which he can do his or her own thing, and there are other forms like television. And there are some worthwhile things on there. So, there just isn't that much time, that's why, possibly, these people are not reading as much, because there are more people reading than there were 50 years ago, 100 years ago.

Floor: We don't need books any more for information and we've got too many sources of information to rely on books totally. We can begin to do some really creative, entertaining, innovative thinking.

Question from the Floor: Would each of you say something about the relation of text and the image? You all have differing facets and are more comfortable than others with text. You're all primarily artists except for the two expert readers. I'd love to hear from every one of you. Maybe I should say, too, my point of view is as a writer. My

visualization takes place in the words as a fiction writer and I'm having some trouble tearing down that tendency in my writing to give the illustration enough space. That's hard for me, psychologically and technically. Being trained one way, I'm a little afraid; I'm afraid the illustrator will pick up what I want and so forth. You're all blessed because you're becoming really familiar, you're artists. But words come easier to some of you than others. Would you all talk about that? Do you have any advice; do you have any rules of thumb?

Weiss: Let go, and let someone else get in there. They will not do what you expected. They won't, not if they're any good. Let the child go and give someone else a chance. Emotionally, it's a very difficult thing. I was the one that said that text in picturebooks is very hard to come by for that very reason, they are very hard to do. But you must, if you are to be good at this, you must leave the spaces and you must let someone else in.

Floor: It strikes me then that what's most important about the story, without an illustrator, is the story. You've got to have a story, a clicky story, but then you look at the books that are out there.... But if you backed off and just looked at the skeleton of it....

Weiss: Someone once said there are no new stories.

Williams: I want to add something. I do both. I don't think of myself as an artist who became a writer, or the other way around. I've always done both. I now have a story in which I did pare down the description. I told the pictures in new words. I wrote it myself, so I had the problem of illustrating it. Am I going to take out where it says he had on a blue and white shirt? I could take it out because he's going to have on a blue and white shirt. But I don't think that words and pictures necessarily replace each other in precisely that way. The repetition of words, the sounds of the names of colors, of foods, of places, is not the same as the pictures of them. The whole thing is more a complementary business in which sometimes you would take it out, and sometimes you would want it doubled over and sometimes it would give a shading, the fact that you both said it and drew it. The word "pink" is a much more remarkably varied item in the universe than the color pink, in a way. Because the word "pink" is every and any pink anybody ever knew or experienced; whereas the one before your eyes is more concrete. Nobody sees one color the same way; they're not the same beast, is what I mean. There's a lot of room to work with. I mean I think that's a sort of a strict dictum when they say pare down because it's going to be illustrated. Maybe you want to say it twice; where does it say "What I tell you three times is true." So there are functions for doing that.

Fisher: My turn. I think each situation is different. There are no two situations ever alike. I feel for you. I really do in terms of

your baby and your creation. I know how we all feel about things that we create. I think that there are times, in an instructional area, you are writing something like that; obviously you're going to have to get some factual material in there, they will have to be on target or you're out. Then there are times when you get feeling romantic and you could move away from all this. You could be dealing with poetry, for example, where you don't want to overwhelm the poet with the pictorial matter. So you allow the pictorial matter to sort of flow along the pages as background, but not completely separated from things you might pick up in the imagery of the words. There are all kinds of ways; you're asking us for some kind of formula and there isn't any. Every time I sit down and do a book, I'm in a state of shock because I don't know what's coming at me. I really don't. And I can never do the same thing twice. They may stylistically look close, or something like that. But each one is like a set of fingerprints. Every one you come at differently, for some aesthetic, philosophical, visual reason.

Haas: I have a good trick that I would like to share. I have a few favorite books. And what I do when I begin to write is I copy the text so that I have it separate from the pictures. It's then that you are able to see what poetry some really good books are. I happen to think that Maurice Sendak is a very fine poet. And when you take his text away from his pictures, you have a very substantial and fundamentally good poem. Every word has a function and the words are evocative and essential. It's incredible what he does, and it's a learning experience. And that's a very helpful thing to do. The people who read to children are probably more aware of it than people who look at and read picturebooks because there are certain books they enjoy reading more than others and those are the ones that are well written.

Fisher: I wonder if I could give you a concise example, a little story. I showed a picture on the screen of a book called The Golden Frog I did with Amico Surany. We had been sitting around, she was an author, that was her first book, and we were brainstorming it. We wanted to do something about Latin America and we had dinner one night and we came out with this Golden Frog and decided together how we were going to do it. First, the collaboration. We liked each other and the mola was right, the whole design was right, we decided to do it and we went with it. It was published by Putnam, and the book did very well. So, Putnam decided we ought to do another. The next book was Ride the Cold Wind; that's the name we came up with. Terrific book. This time we didn't discuss the art, because I knew there was going to be a change. And I started to work this thing out, and work the design out and finally I did one of the illustrations, and Mimi was coming with her husband to dinner one night and I showed her the illustration. She hit the ceiling. She said it's not like The Golden Frog. I said it can't be: The Golden Frog was where it was very hot, and this has to do with the Incas where it's very cold so you're dealing with oranges and yellows as opposed to violets and blues. You're also dealing with a whole different cultural aspect. Well, the upshot of this whole thing

was that she insisted upon seeing everything I did and I insisted upon hiding everything. Every time Mimi would descend on me--I could hear the car coming up the gravel in the driveway--I'd quickly grab everything up and throw it up my ladder. I have an attic in my studio, and I'd climb up that ladder and throw everything up there and she'd come sniffing around there looking for the illustrations. She knew I was doing it. She knew how I was doing it, and she was terrified and she said "That's not how I pictured it. I pictured it like The Golden Frog." The net result was the book came out worlds apart from the other one and she had to finally agree that her visual concept was really verbal in terms of her writing and not in terms of what was really happening visually. And that's why editors like to separate us. I think the reason books look the way they do is because of the editor, or the editor-designer, that comes in between there. They've saved my life on many occasions.

Question from the Floor: Vera, in testing out a book, you've described the first one. And you said it had to please a 26-year-old to 37-year-old. You had to write The Gingerbread House that you made with your own kids. You described the story that a mother had bounced off her kid, and child-tested it that way. How can you decide how much involvement of children you have in the concept and development and the bouncing off reaction?

Floor: I was going to ask that: do you ever take them out to a public school and test them out before. Why not?

Haas: They just want to be read to, and attended to, and get some attention. They're not going to be critical judges.

Weiss: There aren't any "children". There is only one child, and then another child.... What one child would love another child will not.

Williams: That's our feeling. I think there are different kinds of books and children.

Roxburgh: If you want to please 2 million children, do Smurfs.

Floor: They are more discriminating.

Roxburgh: Too many of them aren't.

Floor: Yeah, but they'll ask for some books over and over again.

Williams: Some of them will; there's no such thing as just an average child, but some child will ask for certain books over and over again and some will ask for others, you know.

Fisher: What happened to childhood? That's an interesting ques-

tion; we posed this at lunch this afternoon. Television has created some differences in intellectual levels here. I'm not saying that all childhood is gone, but certainly there is a different perception of childhood today—and I'm not a child psychologist--than there had been in 1890, that's for sure. Our kids are more streetwise at the age of eight today just by what they are seeing on the tube than we were at the age of eight. There's a certain loss of innocence along the line here. I don't understand how we can do what you're asking us to do.

Floor: They're also missing creativity, the ones who are sitting in front of the tube seeing an outside look at this world.

Fisher: That's a good point too. I'm not sure about that.

Roxburgh: This could really deteriorate into a discussion about children if we wanted it to. I think children are a terrific idea. Every book I work on is child tested about three times. There's me, the artist, and the illustrator. Someone cited Sendak here: you go to the child within, or you don't, as the case may be. All you have to offer is that child and if you're lucky enough to be that close to where other children are, terrific. And if you're not, you're in the wrong business. But that's really all you've got to offer.

Williams: I want to say something, because I may have given the impression that there was any response to what you were talking about. I worry about this. I do trust the child in myself, but that's only part of me. As Irene said, you sometimes lose contact with that person because that's a very particular child, who had a particular childhood and particular needs, and is in combination with the grown up. I submitted a manuscript recently and Susan and Libby, who read it, said they liked it very much but it wasn't a children's manuscript because it was too much about nostalgia. I agreed with them when they said children like a great range of things and have a use for a great range of emotion, but nostalgia isn't one of them. Well, I bought that at the moment, and then I discussed it with my daughter who's in her 30's, and therefore also no longer a child, and she said she disagreed with that. She said she could distinctly remember as a child having feelings that you would have to label as nostalgia. But I know that when I go among children, without the specific testing of any particular thing, I am given a corrective to some things I might go into or directions I might go into if I am never with children. I become more conscious of just their ages, their ways of talking. For one thing, there have been such strong generational changes, I think there's a lot of reverence for old-fashioned things in children's books. There's the idea, to some extent, that the late 19th century nursery was somehow the norm of childhood. It wasn't; in fact, most children had not been what's called innocent in most of the world for most of history. Most children have worked, have put up with war and broken families and not enough to eat and all these kinds of things. Or just a hard working home where they weren't very separate from adults. We sort of had this conception of a child which

changes when you go out among children. They really aren't exactly like our reference conception. I think it's valuable to be amongst children, not in a market way of testing a particular manuscript, because I think that way you would only come out with an average child. Nor do I think that either the children or any of us need necessarily be given everything we think we like.

Question from the Floor: I teach, and I'm one of those who reads lots of your books to my kids. The letters that we send to you—do you really read them and do you really answer them? A lot of authors don't leave their address for kids to write to them. My kids are really into the design and the artistic ability as well as the words and I think you need to write for yourself and kids learn to pick out what they like out of a book. I think that when we stop reading books and writing books is when everything else is going to go helter-skelter. I don't care if they watch T.V. 18 hours a day. If I read them a book a day, they're going to remember that and it doesn't matter if there's pictures on it or not because they know their own ideas. So, where do I write to?

Weiss: Write to the publisher and the publisher will forward the letter to the author, or they'll answer them for the authors. I can't speak for other houses but we spend a lot of time doing that.

Haas: How do you get your kids to write to book people? Is it just something you do in class or they do it under duress, or they want to do it?

Floor: We talk about color versus black and white and all that. We've done a lot of Mr. Macaulay's books and we've done Chris Van Allsberg's books. Those are in black and white and they learn to appreciate what there is in that book. They don't care if it's in color, they don't care if it's in black and white. I think with a lot of kids, it's due to how you present it to your kids. I know a lot of people that are adults, my husband for one, who are turned on to picturebooks now because I read them all the time. My kids want to write to you, they want answers back, they want to know that you're real people, not just words on a page.

Roxburgh: The only modification I'd offer to that is everybody up here gets hundreds and hundreds of letters and many times they'll get 35 letters in an envelope that say "Dear Sir, or M'am. My teacher said that we had to write a letter. I'm writing to you. My favorite story is 'Star Wars'. What is your favorite television program. Please write me because the teacher wants you to." I'm not saying you do this, but the point is that hundreds and hundreds of letters come through that way, and they can spend all their time writing back letters to children or they can make the book. I know every illustrator that I've worked with has spent a large amount of time just writing to children, and many have had ongoing correspondence for years as a result of that. But if somebody doesn't respond, it's because they've decided they've got to be

making the books rather than writing children all the time.

Fisher: I answer every single letter that I receive. If I receive them in groups, I answer with one letter; if it's a class, one letter. I try to keep it simple but there is not a single letter or groups of letters that I do not answer and I think the same is true for everybody sitting here.

Floor: So you should send them to the publisher?

Weiss: If you don't have an address, we will answer group letters for the artist, but we forward your letters to Leonard Everett Fisher who I'm sure will be delighted to receive them and read them.

Floor: Do they ever write to a character?

Williams: I got a letter once saying that "you are very smart even though you're very old."

Roxburgh: We get lots of letters to The Brothers Grimm, "Dear Brothers Grimm." We write and say that the Brothers Grimm have long since died. It might be upsetting to hear that your favorite artist has just died.

Macaulay: I'm six months behind in answering letters. But I've been as far back as two years behind. I have to try and figure out what grade they're in when I write back so that (totally embarrassing) the poor guy's in the 10th grade and he gets his letter that's in response to his letter he wrote in the 8th grade. That has happened. I hope they haven't left town. I am six months behind because I've just been working too much.

Floor: But you appreciate hearing from the children?

Macaulay: Sometimes. I don't all the time. Because it just becomes a burden. I feel guilty about not answering for six months. And I never forget that those letters are there, and the pile is growing. I would rather not have a little chunk of my cortex bothered with that stuff, frankly. Especially when I'm trying to make a book.

Weiss: You know, David, we've had some people who would hire somebody for a half a day a week to just answer letters.

Macaulay: I know that would mean a lot to the kids, but it would become a meaningless process for me, in a sense. So they do get answered, and if that's why it takes six months to two years, not necessarily in that order, that's all I can say. The worst letter I ever got was from a library somewhere that was mimeographed. Only my name, the spot for my name, had been left out. I wish I had a mimeograph machine, because I would have produced a response in the same way.

"Dear Mr. so and so" and sent a mimeographed letter back. That's only happened once. Someplace in Pennsylvania. You can't hold them responsible; it's a strange state.

Floor: I would like to tell, and perhaps you'll want to respond to something that I've been working on the last couple of years. I got very upset when I saw research that was done on children's verbal responses to an art object. I was upset because I had been working with the children as an elementary art teacher and there seemed to be giant discrepancies from what I knew of my own children. So, what I decided to do was to change the object that the children were responding to, and I changed it to the picturebook. And while my research is very minimal at this point because it's just for a thesis, what I found was not only a difference in a verbal response but I think more importantly there's a difference in the child's attitude toward the art object. When they were being given a reproduction and they were never given the object, they didn't know it was a reproduction (although I'm sure that most of them knew that it wasn't the same thing as painting on paper or whatever); their response was very minimal, very unenthusiastic and often they seemed to not care to responding. If they did they responded primarily in ways that seemed to be manipulated by the researcher. What I found with the youngest that I've been working with (and part of this is because I used a picturebook as a base of most of what goes on in the art room) is that they are very, very serious about the way they approach the art object that you all are giving to them. And I wish there was some way I could bottle that up and send it to you when you get disgusted or discouraged, or the colors don't come out the way you want them to. Because the children care intensely; they're very inspired verbally and through imagination. You probably are doing more for them than any other human beings in the world to let them be themselves and feel important, and that's a very great thing to do. So I care very much about you and what you've done to the kids.

Weiss: This is a thought in response to one of the questions that you had in your question series. I bring about 20 years of history to the field and way at the front end when I was still at Macmillan, we began to go through some of the old books, the "classics", to examine them for such things as racial slurs. We couldn't believe what we found. We really couldn't. We have become extremely sensitized to that whole range of thinking. Now we seem to be very white and all that, let me assure you that there are no group scenes that we do in our own books that we do not have some kids with glasses, or curly hair that's not blond, and some people with darker skin. We are very aware of that kind of stereotyping that we would like to break without whamming people over the head with a sledge hammer. In other words, we put it there without saying it. We don't let the girls carry the dolls nor do we let the boys carry the guns; we do it where it comes easily and normally and where it should enter the child's subconscious and remain there. I think that's a nice thing to be able to do.

Ken Marantz: How did that jibe with a lot of the other talk that has been given about the artistic integrity or the idea that comes from the forehead of an artist? And you're imposing, you know, it used to be with the words.

Weiss: We have yet to have somebody not immediately respond and say "Yes of course." I mean really, people just weren't aware, weren't sensitized.

Marantz: Okay, let me give you a hypothetical case because it hasn't happened to you. In my vision I see x or y, I don't see z. You're saying that z is the way things ought to be now because you want to avoid racial stereotypes or this or that. What happens?

Weiss: Let's say we have a book: 17 kids in the schoolyard in a picture. You bring in a rough sketch, and I'll say to you, "Ken, don't forget we want at least one kid with glasses and give me some kids that aren't white." You're going to object to that? It's hard to believe that you would.

Marantz: I think it depends on my story. If it's in my neighborhood, I might.

Weiss: Is there a reason to say no? We're not going to ask for this if the book is in Scandanavia. It's got to make sense. The point that I'm trying to make is that it didn't used to exist. Books had certain visual types and they became that to society. You're looking at somebody that used to straighten her hair because straight hair was the thing to have. I think it's nice that we're able to do this and that the children can see this mix in a very natural way and it isn't talked about but it's there.

Marantz: Are there other inputs? You say the kids may or may not have seen this mix because of the television system, may be approaching picturebooks somewhat differently, we're not sure. As far as generating the books themselves (you can't say subconsciously) is there any consciousness of your own vision being <u>now</u> part of the television culture, in that the pace of the sequences, in some way, there's an effort to say the times are changing? A book is still a book; we're talking about a kind of a book, a trade book. Do you have any thoughts about there being more information, more compactness in terms of visual style that would be somewhat modified because they've gotten all this commercial art out on the billboards and in the magazines and on television and so forth? Or is it still very, just you? If it is there, it's totally subconscious. Is that a fair question?

Haas: I think any alert artist living in his world is affected by the individuals around him and he's very selective about what he can use and I think, for instance, I've been very affected by films, and probably to some very small extent I've used it. I don't know that tele-

vision can be an awfully big influence because it moves and you can't hang on to it, it disappears and it's gone. It's so ephemeral, which is one of the reasons I don't think it will ever replace books. Commercial art I think has influenced anyone who is alert and alive, good commercial art, and even bad.

Williams: That would suggest something to me. I sometimes catch myself underrating what I think the people who look at my book might appreciate. I say, oh, that view of something may be too abstract, and then I find myself saying "Wait a minute." Of all the art, probably the exposure of everybody to graphic art is at a very high level of sophistication, so that almost any kind of image, I think, that I would think of putting in a book has already been experienced in some way. There is such a variety of experience. It frees me in a way. I can really have a very free attitude toward space in a book or form, because people have been exposed to so many.

Question from the Floor: I've got a question about marketing. I don't know how it is in trade; this is probably better addressed to the editors. Do you find marketing people lack design knowledge about books and how do you deal with that?

Roxburgh: The marketing people (if I ever called them that, they'd kill me), the people who handle our promotion and such are attuned pretty much to the kinds of books that the house publishes. Each house has a certain kind of look without being narrow about that, but they know what that is and they appreciate it. To a certain extent that's why they're there. Also, the marketing people are in tough positions that the editorial side forgets; they buy the book, they make the book, and they sell it. "Don't ask any questions about it. I don't care if you liked it." That's also part of their skill. I think any person who's in marketing, and promotion and publicity knows that what they bring to it is not necessarily that they adore and love it but that they can market it.

Floor: In your house, do they have any input into the design?

Roxburgh: They certainly do. They have input to the extent that everything has its priority. The primary input is the input of the author, the illustrator; well actually, in terms of design, the illustrator and the designer. But we do show things to some of our people, some of the sales reps who have been in the book business for 40 years. These people know books, they love books, they're just not out there selling tomato soup if they wanted to, they're not. They're selling books and what they have to say is well worth listening to. I think that's true of most of the long term staff of any publisher. They are in accord, their vision is similar and so they all are looking for the same thing. I think Ava would agree with me. There are certain people, if you listen very closely to them, they may not be able to articulate it, they might not be able to say "I think you've got a little too much

leading in there." You don't expect them to have the vocabulary, but they say things and you think, "what are they really talking about and maybe we should look at that again." What you're always looking for is intelligent observers and caring observers. You'll take them wherever you can get them.

Floor: That's fine for experienced people who've been in the business a long time. But as often happens the marketing people in textbooks are the ones who get promotions and get leveled up. Often they have no background in art or writing, either one.

Weiss: The textbook is another world. Most people really don't know that and the people who come to see a publisher will go to one of the big publishers, let's say they go to one of them, Harper's or Macmillan, and they will see one person and think they have seen Macmillan. They haven't begun to scratch the surface. You have all these little empires. We are trade book publishers and what we say is true, I think, by and large, for the established trade book publisher. Textbooks are entirely different; they have their own editorial staff, they have their art directors, their own production department, their own marketing, so it really is different--I mean it is the same but it is, believe me, different. If a book is not adopted by Texas, a program is not adopted by Texas, or in California, it dies. And there is an enormous amount of money invested, and it's on a different scale from us. So marketing becomes much more powerful because there's so much at stake.

Floor: But marketing's not the same as trade books?

Weiss: I think this is put very well. I think we would be fools not to listen to anybody that's intelligent and has a comment to make and we also have to have marketing people who love books. If they say something we listen very hard.

Roxburgh: But no, it's not <u>as</u> important.

Weiss: We could totally overrule them. They may say "I hate that jacket; I think you should redo it." And we have the option to say "That's a very interesting comment, thank you for letting us have it." And that's the end of that.

Roxburgh: In texts, that's what you really can't afford to do. You've got to get to 2 million people, or it's a disaster.

Floor: At what point do the commercial people enter into it?

Roxburgh: Promotion people, people who work in the mail room? If I identify certain people in the house, they see it very early on because I value what they have to say. When do the promotion people see it as a package? They see it when it is as finished as we can make it. So,

they're not going out there with any vagueness in their mind. At our sales conferences they've said they want finished books so that when they go out there, they're not just trying to spread abstract enthusiasm. The best thing that we have to offer is a finished proof, not rough sheets.

Floor: I read a quote about two years ago by, I don't know if it's a marketer, distributor or what; that said that he could get any book on the best seller list depending on how it was marketed. He could distribute it to many different places. Now I could see him getting it someplace but whether people would buy it....

Roxburgh: He's either the richest man in the world, or he's lying. If he could do that he'd be the richest man in the world.

Macaulay: There's plenty of proof, not necessarily with books, although with some books, that you can market just about anything, and sell just about anything.

Weiss: The big problem with advertising and promoting books and the reason why there is relatively little consumer advertising is because (I think this was brought up yesterday) unlike most other products that are manufactured, each book is a thing unto itself and we simply cannot afford to have advertising campaigns for 60 books. So we have list ads. Why don't we advertise these books on television? We'd love to if we could get our money back. You'd have to do each book separately. It becomes impossible.

Floor: I think what she's saying is that there are these books, blockbuster sellers, that are not worth reading, not worth anybody's time, and yet they are bought and they are read.

Weiss: But are we talking about children's books?

Floor: Someone said he could make any book a best seller and apparently that is so judging from what was on the market.

Roxburgh: If you looked at what is happening to the trade, the mass market paperback publishers, you'd have a few of them that seem to have blockbusters. But the number of them that are sold regularly are sold from one corporation to another corporation to another conglomerate, and it is because you've had somebody there saying "I'm going to make a blockbuster out of this." He lost his shirt and the company goes down the tubes. That's what's happening across the board in publishing. People are playing a very expensive crap game and they are losing more often than they are winning. For every Princess Daisy, for every one of those books there are probably 200 others that have just been complete dogs.

Fisher: I wonder if I can answer that in part. I agree with every-

thing everybody's saying. I don't know about blockbusters. I'm not a sales person, I'm not involved in any of that, but I've had a little bit of experience with regard to a couple of my books. We're living in a society where appearance supersedes content, which is what you're talking about. And there is something to be said for packaging: how something is presented that would excite, visually, the public out there. Maybe there's no content out there but they go and buy it anyway. We all know that; it not only deals with books, it deals with a lot of things. I remember doing an art history book on the history of oil painting, 15th to 19th century. And it was not acceptable to a book club because it wasn't thick enough. They said to us—this is quite true—they said to us that they're not familiar with art books that aren't thick and therefore the content must be awfully slim. Yet, the book received four or five stars in most art magazines for the content. But the book club wouldn't take it because the public out there expected something different in terms of the packaging. I think this does go on to some extent, but I don't know how much. It's a question of programming the public in some way. I don't know about the blockbuster part, but I think there is something to be said for forcing sales in some way.

Roxburgh: The book business is a crazy business. It has no right to work and the reason for this is that basically books are sold in bookstores on consignment, which means we can go in there and sell the hell out of a book and get 50, 60, 100, 200, 300 copies to the bookstore. And then a year later, even longer, the bookstores can take the 98 books that are still in the bookstores, put them in a box and ship them back to us and they get a full credit. And then we stick them in a warehouse.

Floor: Yes, that's what it's about because it's always been there.

Floor: They don't gamble.

Weiss: Bookstores don't gamble. There have been numerous attempts to break this pattern. But each time they weren't taking major gambling steps; they would be textbook houses who, incidentally, have a small trade book division who said we will not take returns at all. But I work for a trade book house, William Morrow. We worry a lot in January about the returns that come back.

Roxburgh: Sometimes that's decided in sales conferences. You have to think beforehand we want to tell the sales rep to do a real hard sell on this to get those books out there because the books go out and people order them; you want to have those 35,000 books out there. But what happens is the average return rate—not in children's books by the way—but the average return rate on trade books is 40%. Which means if you print 25,000 books and you put 25,000 books out there you can assume that you'll get about 12,000 of those books back. What do you do with them? Your money is gone, you've made the books, there's nothing to do

with those books but use them or give them to friends. And so you have to play that game very, very carefully. It's still true that much of the sale of children's books is institutional and the return rate for the institutions and libraries are almost nil; for all intents and purposes it is nil. But the trade is an enormously important aspect, more and more now that library budgets are declining.

Question from the Floor: (Regarding warehousing and taxes)

Roxburgh: That's gotten very, very confused. Yes, there was a law called the Powertool decision which was basically leveled against people who made microcomputer chips and pieces of hardware that they were deducting from their taxes (someone correct me if I'm wrong). They were deducting from their taxes the full retail price of the book or the piece of equipment and they were making enough supplies for ten years. So the government decided that this really was a tax dodge, so they should do something about it. But when they did it, they did it in a standard, all-inclusive, unintelligent way. And they applied it to the book business. The people who were really hurt were the textbooks for colleges, when they print an introductory textbook for a five year supply and they print 150,000 copies and then for the next four years you've got 120,000, then 100,000, then 80,000 until they had to reprint. And so what happens was instead of being able to deduct that retail price, they were suddenly only able to write off the manufacturing cost. They ended up spending an enormous amount of money to warehouse these books and so they ended up having to trash the books. It was costing them more money to keep them than otherwise. Publishing is a very capital, money intensive, cash intensive business. They've got to come in and out quickly, you're always keeping plates spinning. Most trade book publishers try very hard to keep a tight control on their inventory; you don't want warehouses too full of books. You want to move those books so we try to print for 18 months and then reprint, and we can do fairly small reprints. Some people who print enormous amounts do get caught up in that bind. I think, it did affect all of us but I don't think it was quite the disaster for one small aspect of the book publishing industry, as some people spelled it out. It gets very confusing. It didn't help, but everybody had to, because of the change in economy, try to keep a very tight control on inventory.

Weiss: By the way, people often wonder why books are allowed to go out of print. This is sometimes very painful to the publisher. A black and white or a two color book is fairly inexpensive to reprint; therefore we can reprint small quantities and for a book that sells 600 copies a year we can reprint 3,000. Now you can figure out how many years' worth of books that gives us, but 3,000 is a very small quantity. If we do a large four or five color book, it's very difficult for us to reprint a small quantity, because just to start up the presses is too expensive. And if we know what the sales are and we project the quantity and a price, and how many years' worth of books we have to print to be able to reprint, then we let the book go out of print. That's really

how these decisions are made. If you sell fewer than x number of copies a year, how small a reprint can we afford to do and keep a price at which we think we can still sell it? And if these figures don't work out, then the copyright is offered back to the artist. And the book goes out of print.

Roxburgh: That's where it becomes purely economic. To give you concrete numbers, you might have a book, a classic book, that's been in print for 20 years that sells between 750 and 1,000 a year. You can't reprint a full color picturebook less than 10,000. You've got 10 years' supply of that book in your warehouse. The economics are killing.

Weiss: Even if you do 6,000 and you make it more expensive.

Roxburgh: That's why you'll see reprints of books that were originally printed for $4.95 and suddenly the publisher raises it to $7.95 and then suddenly they do a reprint and it's $12.95; that is a shock.

Weiss: We would be so happy if we'd only get enough requests to reprint. The point is we're not getting the requests.

Question from the Floor: But when you see a book that's been reprinted, that's been out of print for quite some time--for example, I'm thinking of Little Blue and Little Yellow—did it make out well?

Weiss: Every once in a while a publisher will decide that a book is so good we should reissue it. On this next list we have a book by Don Crews which he originally did for Harper and Row called We Read--A to Z. It's a brilliant book, it's been out of print, and we decided it really should be in print. So, we're bringing it out anew.

Question from the Floor: That's just your decision to do it, or was it maybe suggested that you had a demand for it, because you loved it and appreciated it?

Weiss: Because it was so good, because it's our tenth anniversary year, and all of us have been drooling about that book, we should have published it, we said "why not"?

Roxburgh: Every once in a while that happens, you just throw all caution to the wind and you say, "Well, we'll do it."

Haas: What if I had a book that I liked that was out of print and I thought was worthy of republication and had the rights to it now, and I brought it to you, what would you do--the same as if it were a new manuscript?

Roxburgh: No, not the same, because the complication is that if you had a book that was in print either it had a good life, or it didn't have a good life, but say 20,000 copies were sold 10 years ago. And if

you can find out the publisher who originally had it let it go out of print, that means it's not worth reordering. It might be that the market for that book (I hate to use these terms) is saturated. It could be that 18,000 of these books are still out there. And so you have to think "Well, wait a minute. Has it been out long enough so that people who know and love the book want it again, or is there enough of a new audience to reissue it?"

Weiss: In our case, that was true of Don Crews. His two books did nothing for many years. He started doing books again and was very successful. Meanwhile the two books went out of print and we hope that we are right in saying that there's a whole new audience out there.

Roxburgh: David Godine, yesterday, showed you a book, Rotten Island by William Steig. It's the first book that William Steig ever did. It was published in the 60's, so that was years ago and he's issuing it with new separations and everything else, like a new book. I hope it goes. That's the kind of decision you have to make.

Question from the Floor: What is the average run of a book?

Roxburgh: I don't think you can start with less than 15.

Weiss: On a full color book, 15 is an absolute minimum.

Roxburgh: And with a little bit of a book that we're really enthusiastic about, we'd probably start with the first print of 30,000 and then reprints. But I don't think we'd start with 50,000 prints because 30,000, they sell in the first six months. That would be wonderful, but we tend not to go that way.

Weiss: A house like Random House, which goes after a mass market, where we go after another market, will have a first printing of 60,000.

Roxburgh: I think 30 is probably our highest.

Question from the Floor: I have a question about the limbo status of certain books, the ones that are out of stock, not out of print. They appear in the catalog, we keep ordering them, they come back marked out of stock. What is the logic behind that?

Weiss: No, there's something that's gone wrong, some horrible foul up some place because if you order a book, we want to sell it to you. If it's out of stock we need new stock in. But we're dealing with people--it's not that it doesn't happen to us. When we hear about it we go bananas.

Floor: It's the ones that are "OSI" and the order is cancelled. Effectively, you're being told that some day this is going to go out of print.

Roxburgh: I don't like that category, but basically it means out of print but we haven't reserved the rights. What we're hoping against hope is we can figure out some way to put it back in stock. Out of stock just means "Hold on a little bit; we're going to reprint it." Out of stock indefinitely means we can't figure out any way to reprint this book. Because of the change in the whole institutional market and the decline of the democratic presidential types, we've all had to turn more and more to the trade. Every trade book publisher used to just basically be able to publish books and the librarians would buy them as fast as they could publish them, but that created an unnatural situation. Things are getting more natural and therefore tougher and now we're really having to turn to the trade, to the bookstores to try to sell our books and compete in the bookstores. And the more children's bookstores there are the more chance we have and so that's why you have publishers doing everything they can to support the independent book sellers and people going to children's only bookstores. And the children's book department in the general trade stores are starting to turn, put an awful lot of money and energy into promoting a book in the trade. So yes, that's enormously helpful.

Floor: There's a real need for children's bookstores. There's a great deal here in Columbus. But I live in Cleveland, and there are no children's bookstores there. I have to come down here to buy books. I'm a teacher, I'm not a business lady.

Ken Marantz: I'll end as I began, thanking our friends from the creative side of the fence, so to speak, for coming and spending this day and a half with us and to all of you who have come to suffer through the heat with us. I think it was worth it.